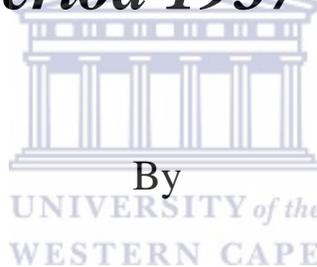


*University of the Western Cape
Faculty of Education*

*A History of the Ottery School of
Industries in Cape Town: Issues of
Race, Welfare and Social Order in
the period 1937 to 1968*



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*A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of
Education, University of the Western Cape*

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Abstract

The primary task of this thesis is to explain the establishment of the 'correctional institution', the Ottery School of Industries, in Cape Town in 1948 and the programmes of rehabilitation, correctional and vocational training and residential care that the institution developed in the period until 1968. This explanation is located in the wider context of debates about welfare and penal policy in South Africa. The overall purpose is to show how modernist discourses in relation to social welfare, delinquency, and education came to South Africa and was mediated through a racial lens unique to this country. In so doing the thesis uses a broad range of material and levels of analysis from the ethnographic to the documentary and historical. The work seeks to locate itself at the intersection of the fields of education, history, welfare, penalty and race in South Africa.

The unique contribution of the study lies in the ways in which it engages with the nature of welfare institutions that took the form of Schools of Industries in the apartheid period. The thesis asserts that the motivation for the development of the institution under apartheid was not just the extension of crude apartheid policy, but was also inspired by welfarist and humanitarian goals. In this regard the thesis uses the life histories of nine informants who were pupils at Ottery in the period under review, to demonstrate what can be revealed about social policy and apartheid through studies of an ethnographic nature.

Declaration

I declare that A History of the Ottery School of Industries in Cape Town: Issues of Race, Welfare and Social Control in the period 1937 to 1968 is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.



Nur-Mohammed Azeem Badroodien UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE *March 2001*

Signed:

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Many people and institutions contributed in significant and far-reaching ways to the conception, writing and printing of this thesis. I am deeply grateful and indebted to all parties in varying ways.

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astounding humanity truly humbled me. Moosa's moral and personal support at a time when I was desperately looking for ways of understanding and dealing with tragedy also ensured that my research did not falter when I suffered deep personal loss in 1997. Moosa reminded me in his everyday practice that social injustice was an unwanted but very prevalent aspect of life in South Africa. I am also grateful and thankful for the warmth, understanding, encouragement and support provided by the principal of Ottery, Mr Allie. Neville Goliath and Nazeema Saieet also deserve special mention.

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It goes without saying that I would never have survived the past six years without the support, both social and sometimes financial, of my loving parents and various members of my extended family (both my siblings as well as my in-laws). My parents are really exceptional and particularly unselfish human beings whom I dearly love.

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Key Words

Correctional education policy

South Africa

Delinquency and social order

History and School of Industries

'Colouredness' under apartheid

Discourse of crime and disorder

Writing life histories

Social injustice

Policy blurring

Social reform

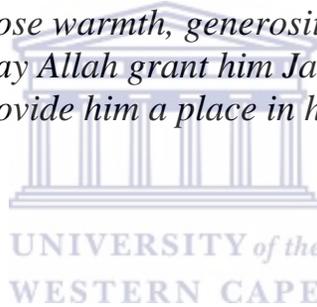
Criminalisation and racialisation



For Tajudien

This work is dedicated to my loving brother, Tajudien Badroodien, who was murdered by three juvenile delinquents on the 5th October 1997. I can only hope that my work in future will contribute to social transformation that will reduce the frequency of such human tragedy.

My youngest brother Tajudien was truly a remarkable and most wonderful person whose warmth, generosity and humility will always serve to guide me. May Allah grant him Jannah, inshallah (May God provide him a place in heaven).



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Introduction



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Introduction

The analysis of the problem of youth crime and youthful misconduct in South Africa is generally characterised by the absence of historical perspective.¹ Even though street violence and disorder are durable features of the social landscape, most people generally struggle to comprehend the processes that have ushered in or contributed to the discourse of crime and delinquency. In this regard, while much has been said and written about the major crime and gang problems in South Africa and how to solve them, very few perspectives are offered on the nature and history of the institutions that were established to deal with ‘youthful misconduct’ in the first place. Most of these contemporary commentators have also failed to acknowledge that the debate about youth deviancy and ‘maladjustment’ is not a new one.

For example, the problem of youth ‘misconduct’ in South Africa was also of significant concern for the Union Government of the 1940s, and served to inform the conceptualisation of social policies in quite distinct ways at that time. In that period, many social policies were formulated to address the perceived increase of juvenile delinquency in urban areas. These policies also sought to put in place mechanisms that would provide safety nets to prevent children from ‘falling into crime’.

In this regard the thesis focuses on the establishment in 1948 of a social institution for ‘coloured’ boys who were deemed to be in danger of becoming delinquent. Established on the eve of the Nationalist Party victory in South Africa in 1948, the history of the Ottery School of Industries for ‘coloured’ boys is traced through the key years of grand apartheid into the 1960s to show how international modernist

¹ This point is visible in much of the literature which has emerged since the 1970s that focuses on the history of social welfare and penal institutions. See Ignatieff, M (1983), ‘Total Institutions and

discourses in relation to social welfare, delinquency, and education came to South Africa and were mediated through a racial lens unique to this country. It is argued that the meshing of international ideas and local political/ideological forces not only created the conditions for the establishment of this ‘correctional’² institution in Cape Town in 1948, but also informed the ways in which social policy generally addressed the needs and demands of the indigent ‘coloured’ population in that period. In this regard the term ‘correctional institution’ is particularly misleading. As will be shown in the thesis, in the period under review the facilities at the Ottery School of Industries were predominantly provided for indigent ‘coloured’ boys with welfare and other social needs.

The ‘correctional’ institution at Ottery, Cape Town, was a Union Education Department facility that from 1948 provided for ‘coloured’ boys deemed by the Children’s Courts to be ‘in need of care’.³ In this regard, the thesis is concerned to examine the historical and policy context in which the institution took shape by locating the institutional history and ethos both in an international setting as well as within the very specific context of apartheid South Africa. The study thus makes serious attempts to theorise the field of social policy development in South Africa (at the intersection of welfare, law, criminality and education) at a crucial moment both in the politics of modernisation and in the politics of apartheid policy formulation. It is argued that such an approach offers a rare opportunity to analyse the complexities of social policy development within the apartheid context, when

Working Classes: A review Essay’, *History Workshop*, No.15, 1983, pp 167-172, in which he reviews five historical studies on the topic of penal state institutions.

² The term is derived from the link between reformatories and schools of industries. Since the control of reformatories was transferred to the Union Education Department in 1934, both reformatories and schools of industries have been referred to as Children’s Act schools that differentially address the needs of indigent, ‘uncontrollable’ and delinquent children. The only clear difference between the two sets of institutions is the degree of ‘maladjustment/delinquency’ of the relevant children. The crucial link between the institutions with regard to ‘correctional provision’ is that children sent to schools of industries were transferred to reformatories when their behaviour was deemed to warrant such a ‘punishment’ (but not visa versa).

³ ‘In need of care’ is a legal term that is used by the Children’s Acts of 1913, 1937, 1960, 1983 and 2000 to describe children deemed to be neglected, abused, orphaned, maladjusted and maltreated. A child is brought before the Children’s Court that then determines whether the child requires state aid

policy production was not just a simple and cynical manipulative exercise by the apartheid regime but was also inspired by welfarist and humanitarian motives, whatever the results. This is clearly apparent in the life stories that are provided in the thesis, of nine informants who were pupils at Ottery in the period under review. The stories are included in the study not only to make the ‘theory’ work, but also to demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of policy analysis that relies far too heavily on traditional historical sources and sociological theory.

The key contribution of the work is that it provides new insights into how penal institutions with a welfarist cast specifically designed for ‘coloured’ children came into being, took shape and moulded their wards in the apartheid period. It builds on work such as Linda Chisholm’s doctoral thesis of 1989 that examined penal institutions for children of all races, but which analysed industrial (‘correctional’) schools in South Africa in relation only to ‘white’ children.

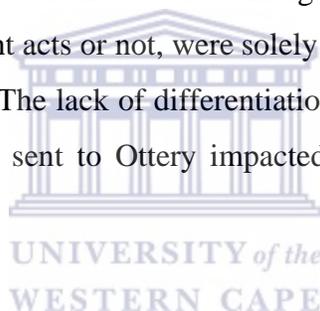
Where the thesis moves substantially beyond the existing literature on ‘correctional’ institutions in South Africa is in its assertion that the social institution at Ottery was also one of the first ‘melting pots’ in South Africa at which social policy for indigent ‘coloureds’ was formulated and tested. It is argued that the Ottery School of Industries was a testing site at which an envisaged ‘image of the coloured family’ was constructed for the ‘coloured’ working classes. The ideas that informed this construction were derived at that time from a variety of social disciplines, academic debates, and social contestations.

In this regard, the thesis provides an account of an institution that was created some time after similar institutions had been established for ‘white’ children, and on which its establishment was generically based. It is argued that while the creation of the institution as a School of Industries specifically for ‘coloured’ children was very much shaped by experiences derived from the industrial schools movement, its

and possible institutionalisation. A child need not be in conflict with the law to be classified as ‘a child in need of care’. For further information, refer to Section B, Chapter 2.

establishment was also firmly embedded in the assumptions and practices governing segregated child care legislative provisions, institutions and professional work at that time. For that reason the study highlights both the role of the 'coloured' middle class in establishing the institution as well as the combination of religious, economic, welfarist, nationalist and humanist motivations for its establishment.

By weaving together a range of secondary, primary and oral sources the study seeks to tell one clear and unambiguous tale, namely that the underlying ideas and processes that informed the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in 1948 led to a very real blurring of the categories of 'correctional', educational and welfarist provision for the 'coloured' indigent population of South Africa in that period. The most visible outcome of this blurring of policy formulation under apartheid was that the needs of all 'coloured' indigent boys over fourteen years old, whether prone to delinquent acts or not, were solely addressed within the confines of 'correctional' institutions. The lack of differentiation between the various 'kinds' of 'coloured' boys that were sent to Ottery impacted on their lives in complex and ambiguous ways.



With regard to the social context of that period, the study will show that the establishment of the Ottery institution was an intrinsic aspect of the social reform programmes of the United Party government of the 1940s. The establishment of the Ottery facility in 1948 on the model of industrial schools that had long existed for 'white' children formed part of a wider picture of emergent change in social policy under the United Party, that came to an abrupt halt in 1948. In this regard the social initiatives that were embarked upon after the Second World War by the United Party had sought to 'progressively' attend both to the welfare needs of 'coloured' children in South Africa at that time, as well as to the 'social order' and urban requirements of the emerging modern state. This key period in South African history profoundly shaped the ways in which the modernising apartheid government after 1948 addressed the social problems of the 'coloured' population. These policy responses

were significantly shaped by the complex, and sometimes contradictory, social and economic pursuits of the emerging modern order of that time.⁴

The thesis highlights both the ambiguity of social policy for ‘coloured’ boys as well as the mixture of motives that lay behind the reform ethos of the architects of apartheid in the marginal area of ‘correctional education’ policy. It is then really a sad irony that ‘coloured’ boys were criminalised by the very system that sought to rescue them from a life of pauperism and crime. While the ethos of the institution may have produced a context that had great potential for the transformation of young lives at that time, there is much evidence to indicate that despite the perhaps good intentions of its founders and many of its personnel, the institution failed to live up to its promise. This failure can clearly be traced to the ways in which the discourses that informed social policy at that time shaped and formulated the ‘coloured’ subject.

A Modern Society of Corrections

It is notable that the discourse of modernity and enlightenment that had evolved in South Africa from the turn of the twentieth century had given rise to a set of social reform initiatives that assumed the virtue and inevitability of a particular kind of modern society that was emerging.⁵ Within the emerging modern society of that period, there existed a set of ideological assumptions about modernity that took for granted that economic growth, capitalism, industrialisation and urbanisation were all positive and progressive developments. It was assumed that not only were the social reforms engendered by modernity imbued with an ethos that was ‘essentially good’, but also that they were the only initiatives possible at the time.

⁴ See the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk (IMC) (1996), ‘In Whose Best Interests?’ *Report on Places of Safety, Schools of Industry and Reform Schools*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.41)

⁵ Chisholm, L (1989), *Reformatories and Industrial Schools in South Africa: A Study in Class, Colour and Gender in the period 1882 to 1939*, (Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand: unpublished doctoral thesis, pp.380-382)

This type of 'modernist' thinking had informed the redefinition of the role of imprisonment and institutionalisation in South Africa after 1910 in quite significant ways. The Union Government thereafter gradually ceased to use the infliction of pain as a form of social control. Instead, the mechanisms of social control that were developed by the emerging modern state focused on the moulding of the attitudes and morals of those that were institutionalised through 'rehabilitative' programmes within penal and other state institutions. It was maintained at the time that by 'observing', 'controlling' and 'transforming' the actions and movements of those deemed to be a danger to society, society-as-a-whole could be 'regulated'. Institutionalisation and incarceration thus came to embody a range of techniques and forms of knowledge that were used to inform the 'rehabilitation' programmes of penal and other Union Government institutions. These techniques and knowledge bases were in turn informed by the social, political and economic contexts of life in South Africa at that time, as well as by the ideological reconstruction of South African society.

Penal and social strategies that emphasised 'rehabilitation' and 'surveillance' were generally based on notions of rationality and scientific thought that were evident within many international debates on penal and social reconstruction in that period. With regard to South Africa after 1910, Chisholm has noted that the discourse of 'rehabilitation' meshed in complex ways with ideas derived from religious, social, educational, as well as penal practice at that time. This discourse highlighted the ideals of both 'moral salvation' and 'scientific intervention'.

The sinner could be saved. The dishonest person could be made honest and morally whole. And the illiterate and mentally deficient could be trained in habits of decency and discipline if removed from conditions conducive to crime. On removal to environments where they could be cured of their crime, these persons, as in a hospital, could then be restored to social and individual health.⁶

Within this conceptualisation of social reconstruction, criminality and poverty then came to symbolise danger, disorder and sin. In this regard, rehabilitation'

⁶ Chisholm (1989), p.98

programmes at Union Government institutions from 1910 increasingly focused on work and moral training as essential functions of social ‘correctional’ institutions. It was argued that by providing ‘deviant’ and indigent persons within Union Government institutions with work skills and moral training, they would be encouraged to give up their ‘criminal’ or ‘anti-social’ ways’. Work training was also associated with notions of productivity, peace, orderliness, and rationality that underlay the influence of modernity. In South Africa after Union in 1910 educationalists in particular asserted that the ‘criminally-tainted’ and ‘morally-deficient’ could be ‘saved’ and ‘converted’ into ‘useful citizens’ by providing educational programmes that emphasised the development of ‘acceptable’ attitudes to social life and employment. The building up of healthy and moral ‘citizens’ was linked in this period to the development of ‘correct habits of work’, respect for property, respect for fellow citizens, and an emphasis on the rational ordering of social life. Significantly, the ideas that informed ‘the fight’ against various forms of ‘chaos’ in the first half of the twentieth century was conceived within the complex and contradictory construction of a ‘modern’ colonial society.⁷

The development of ‘modern’ social institutions in South Africa

The Ottery School of Industries belongs to a set of institutions that is also referred to as government industrial schools, and has its origin in the industrial schools movement that evolved from the 1890s in South Africa.

⁷ David Rothman has argued that the development of social institutions in the United State of America was derived from a desire in the middle of the nineteenth century to reproduce an idealised social order. Each set of institutions were imbued with particular ideas and perceived functions. Also, each set of institutions had their own histories. Rothman asserted however that all institutions were informed by a common set of overall ‘rationalist’ and scientific assumptions associated with the development of modern capitalist society. This informed the ways in which the various sets of institutions developed. Rothman has noted that the reconstruction of social practice during the middle of the nineteenth century had led to the development of a network of interrelated institutions, namely “penitentiaries for the criminal, asylums for the insane, almshouses for the poor, orphan asylums for homeless children and reformatories for the delinquent”. See Rothman, D (1971), *Discovery of the Asylum*, (Boston, Little Brown, p.xiii)

In this regard, Linda Chisholm has provided an insightful and comprehensive historical analysis of the emergence of industrial schools in South Africa.⁸ She has noted that the first industrial schools in South Africa developed in the 1890s to combat the ‘poor whiteism’ created by drought, locusts and rinderpest. Chisholm notes that these industrial schools were provided to ‘rescue’ ‘poor white’ children from indigence and ‘proneness to criminal activity’ at that time.

In South Africa after 1910, this form of ‘salvation’ was increasingly cast in terms of the removal of indigent ‘white’ children from urban slums, where they were supposedly ‘driven to immorality’ by mixing with ‘non-whites’. Chisholm notes that the subtle transformation of these institutions in the period after 1910 was directly linked to the establishment of a modernising state and to the various social consequences of the mining revolution. It was also associated with the ways in which colonial society was racially ordered at that time.

The structural changes in the economy and society in general after 1910 had brought into being a new class of impoverished ‘whites’, among whom begging, vagrancy and criminal activity had become a shared fate with the ‘non-white’ populations that inhabited urban slums. With the promulgation of the Children’s Protection Act in 1913, many of the original industrial schools were transformed into institutions that were “more or less like reformatories,”⁹ and which catered exclusively for destitute and neglected ‘white’ children ‘likely to fall into crime’. Government industrial schools here were institutions that catered for a particular type of indigent or ‘anti-social’ ‘white’ child.

That industrial schools were associated with crime, crime with poverty, and poverty amongst whites with degradation to the status of blacks in South Africa marked these institutions and the children in them in a particular way. Industrial schools carried with them from the first the connotation of poor whites. In that period the taboo surrounding children from these institutions were not derived so much from their connection with vocational schooling or poverty as their association with black people in urban slums.¹⁰

⁸ Chisholm (1989), pp.6-7

⁹ Malherbe, EG (1977), *Education in South Africa, Volume II: 1930-1970*, (Cape Town, p.165)

¹⁰ Chisholm (1989), p.15; It is noted that the quote tends to underplay the importance of class or even racial tension within ‘white’ society between English and Afrikaans-speakers.

In this regard, Chisholm maintains that the provision of government industrial schools was conceived not only as a rational mechanism for stabilising the urban ‘white’ working classes at that time, but also as a specific way of protecting the ‘white’ colonial subject from the taint of ‘backwardness’ and irrationality.

From the 1930s the initial function of government industrial schools was somewhat modified. By that time the influence of various disciplines in the scientific field had come to play a crucial role in the ways in which the institution was reconstituted. Union Education Department officials asserted that the chief object of government industrial schools was not to treat ‘their charges’ as juvenile delinquents or criminals, but rather to focus on how the children could be resocialised to accept and internalise the ‘norms’ of the dominant society. By treating juvenile delinquency as an educational and social dilemma, issues of social disorder became conflated with issues of poverty in the official policy texts of this period.¹¹ This development had great significance for a country in which the majority lived in dire poverty, and where ‘non-whites’ constituted the majority of the population.

The influence of scientific knowledge on social policy then increasingly led to the location of the problems associated with delinquency and crime within the social make-ups and psyches of individual children. Social theorists asserted at that time that the identification of the problems of individual children via scientific investigation could then be used to locate the various ‘sites’ of the ‘maladjustment’ of the individual children, which could subsequently be ‘cured’ or ‘transformed’.

The provision of a social institution for ‘coloured’ boys

It was within this context that the Ottery School of Industries was established in 1948. The institution was established to provide for ‘coloured’ ‘in need of care’ boys in four essential ways. They were:

- a) A residential programme that provided ‘coloured’ boys with food, shelter,

¹¹ The ‘scientific link’ that was made between poverty and crime was common to most international debates on education and social welfare at that time.

- clothing, religious instruction, and a 'stable' living environment;
- b) Psychological counselling that focused on addressing the emotional needs and problems of individual boys;
- c) Academic education that sought to ensure that each boy attended school regularly. It was asserted that the knowledge attained at school and the regularity of schooling would induct boys into the routine-ness of the world of work;
- d) The provision of training in particular trades in which it was believed 'coloured' boys would find employment'.

It is notable that each set of provisions at the Ottery institution had its own history. These 'histories' included the degree of previous provision for the institutionalisation of youths in 'correctional' institutions to address their residential needs, the development of psychological testing for 'problem' children, to the emergence of social welfare relief programmes in South Africa, the provision of compulsory schooling for 'non-white' children, and the links that were 'made' between religious salvation and work training. Significantly, the various programmes provided for 'coloured' boys at the Ottery institution were informed by a common set of overall 'rationalist' or scientific assumptions that were associated with the development of a modern capitalist society based on policies of rigid segregation in South Africa after the Second World War.

The link to the contemporary period

In contemporary South Africa political and social mobilisation around the issues of crime and social disorder has invariably pointed to the 'poor' social conditions of the indigent to indicate the material and metaphorical existence of 'disorder', 'danger' and 'disease'. Presented in this way, poverty has somewhat crudely and unproblematically been identified as the predominant cause of criminality and anti-social behaviour. What is not highlighted is that such perceptions of crime and disorder in South Africa often detracts attention from fundamental issues of inequality and injustice, and the ways in which these issues have been inscribed into the discourse of crime and disorder.

In the past the issue of race was used in the urban setting to produce numerous images of urban crises. This can be seen quite clearly in the segregationist and apartheid discourse on migration into towns and cities particularly in the first half of the twentieth century.¹² Calls for 'safer streets' invariably mobilised images of disorder, mayhem and social mismanagement that were directly derived from racial associations.

Given the metaphorical and historical links between race, crime and poverty, demands for 'safer streets' in the contemporary period have inevitably been tied to notions of 'supposed harmony in the past', and to the notion that while the urban town was previously a safe haven from the external 'enemy', this 'enemy' was now within its gates. Within the conception of the term 'the enemy within' in urban areas lies connotations of race and crime that readily suggest that poor, uneducated and disadvantaged communities are 'the enemy', that they are responsible for criminality, and that they represent future social chaos.¹³

Such misrepresentations of the social problems of contemporary South African society have serious implications for social policy formulation that seeks to address problems of the past. The thesis argues that the criminalisation and racialisation of poverty in South Africa is clearly visible both in the institutions of the South African criminal justice system as well as in institutions within the education and welfare

¹² For the United State of America, Kennedy has argued that at various times the general feeling that crime, poverty and delinquency were out of control was too easily linked to beliefs that cities were being overrun by immigrants, and that the 'dangerous classes' were out of control in urban areas at times of fundamental changes at societal level. Kennedy asserts that no enough attention is paid to the impact of changes in the institutions of social control (and to the ways in which they contribute to social transformation) at times like that. See Kennedy, D (1997), 'Crime waves, culture wars, and societal transformations', *Crime, Law & Social Change*, No.26, p.101; Also see Sack, F (1995), 'Socio-Political Change and Crime: A Discourse on theory and method in relation to the new face of crime in Germany', *Crime, Law & Social Change*, No.24; and McGarrell, EF (1989), 'The Ideological bases and functions of contemporary juvenile law reform: The New York State experience', *Contemporary Crises*, No.13

¹³ See Keith, M (1993), 'From Punishment to Discipline', in Cross M and Keith M (eds), *Racism, the City and the State*, (London, Routledge, pp.193-209)

departments that provided state care.¹⁴ Criminalisation and racialisation were processes that were clearly tied to the ways in which elements of social ordering under apartheid were inscribed into models for urban planning, health care, housing, education and social welfare projects. For significant social transformation to occur it is therefore absolutely essential that the arenas in which the reproduction and legitimisation of racist images of ‘non-white’ criminality and poverty flourished, be clearly and critically understood.

Methodology, structure and the ‘theorisation of colouredness’

It is necessary with regard to the above assertions to briefly discuss the ways in which various terms and references are used in the thesis and to analyse what it was about ‘colouredness’ that informed the provision of a ‘correctional’ social institution at the Ottery site. It is argued that particular notions of ‘colouredness’ were used to frame the ways in which the needs of the ‘coloured’ boys at Ottery were subsequently met.

In the draft copy of the thesis a separate chapter was provided that analysed various notions of ‘coloured’ identity and the nature of the process of identity building in the period before 1948. This was related to the particular way in which the pressures of identity building worked themselves out inside ‘coloured’ politics. The draft chapter sought to show the diverse elements that made up what is referred to as ‘coloured identity’, and argued that people referred to as ‘coloured’ in that period contested their various realities and ‘imposed’ or ‘developed’ identities in many ways. There were certainly many notions of what it meant to be ‘coloured’ in that period and this shaped the ways in which Union Government policy was formulated. For example, there were significant differences between the ways in which members of the middle class ‘coloured’ population responded to their social lives, and that of members of the working class ‘coloured’ population. There were also many differences within

¹⁴ Institutions of the criminal justice services included the police, courts, prisons, reformatories, while institutions focused more on the welfare needs of ‘inmates’ were schools of industries, children’s homes, hostels and probation services.

the loosely-formed group referred to as ‘coloureds’ based on religious beliefs, whether they lived in urban or rural areas, in which urban environment they grew up, the level of indigency of individual ‘coloured’ communities, whether they supported the policies of the National Party or the United Party, whether they supported the African Political Organisation or the more militant National Liberation League or the Non-European United Front, whether they lived in the Southern or Northern Suburbs of Cape Town, and even whether some of them could ‘pass for white’ while others couldn’t. Opinions also varied about how to address and contest Union Government legislation at that time. It was argued in the draft chapter that this ambivalence significantly influenced the ways in which various members of the ‘coloured’ population addressed and responded to the issues of crime, poverty and social order in the period 1938 to 1970.

Given the diverse literature and divergent views on the topic, the chapter was regarded as too long-winded and complicated for the purposes of the thesis. It was also felt that by taking a particular stance on the issue of ‘coloured identity’ both the author and the reader would be ‘distracted’ from engaging with the material provided in the narrative of the study. Given that the identity of the author was itself shaped by the way in which he experienced ‘colouredness’, it was decided to omit the chapter and instead provide a brief review of the factors that generally informed the discussion on ‘colouredness’ before 1948. This may well be the most significant weakness of the study. It may even be regarded as a cop-out. The opinions of the author can in any case be found in their complex forms throughout the thesis, and will inevitably be linked to what was included in the thesis and what was left out.

Crucial methodological considerations

There are particular conventions adopted in this work that need to be addressed from the outset. They are linked to theoretical and practical dilemmas faced by the author in the conceptualisation of the project. They relate to the issue of how to present the ‘racial’ labels that emerged in a rigid form under apartheid, as well as how to

identify the central foci of the study. In very brief ways, the mechanisms that are used in the text to address these dilemmas are explained below.

There are numerous conventions that have been used to identify the 'racial' subjects of apartheid society. Given the historical approach used in the thesis, the terms 'coloured', 'white', 'indian' and 'african' are used in their most simple form to identify the various role players within the narrative of the text provided. It is noted however that the terms are specific constructions of a past social structure in which a hierarchical ordering based on race was inscribed into the fabric of life in South Africa.¹⁵ The terms are therefore neither 'natural' nor acceptable descriptions of particular identities. In this regard, when used in the text the terms are presented in a decapitalised form to emphasise both the irrelevance of racial status in the reference, and to underline the simplistic aspect of the usage of the term. At the same time, it was deemed necessary to use inverted commas when referring to terms describing race-designated groups, to indicate the contested nature of identity formation in South Africa. The degree to which some aspects of 'racial categories' have been internalised and have meshed with the social, religious and economic realities of life under apartheid to reflect 'lived experiences', creates all sorts of dilemmas for the historian in the social sciences.¹⁶ Many groups in society have framed their beliefs and existence on perceived and contested experiences and practices that provide them with a particular way of understanding their realities. It is not the object of the work to address this debate. For the sake of 'convenience' then, the statutory terms employed under apartheid are used simply to delineate or identify role players in historical context.

¹⁵ Horrell provides a description of the statutory definitions under apartheid, as well as a discussion of some of the ambiguities that have arisen. See Horrell, M (1971), *Legislation and Race Relations*, (Johannesburg, South African Institute of Race Relations)

¹⁶ Lewis has defined the development of what is referred to as 'coloured identity' as a social process that was neither static nor unchanging. He asserts that the 'identity' came to unify a group of persons with common social, political and economic interests at particular historical junctures. This 'identity' also served as a vehicle to defend or secure material and social gains at various times. See Lewis, G (1987), *Between the Wire and the Wall: a History of South African 'Coloured' Politics*, (Cape Town, David Philip, p.4)

It is notable however that such an approach is fraught with difficulties. What does one do for example when reference is made to ‘Europeans’, ‘non-Europeans’, ‘non-whites’, ‘natives’, ‘Bantu’, ‘Afrikaners’, ‘Malays’ or (much later) ‘Blacks’? At various times in the history of South Africa, various indicators were used to identify role players according to a set of assumptions located in the local context. In the thesis, all these terms are also decapitalised and framed in inverted commas. It is conceded though, especially for the earlier period, that there are places in the text where the usage described above is uneven. This unevenness is also evident when the words and terms (and the conventions) of other authors are quoted.

Furthermore, the term working class is also used in the text in very unproblematised and open-ended ways. The term is used broadly to signify social class position. It is notable that in South Africa this social position was located in contexts that were informed by a host of other factors that included ‘racial designation’, the area and province in which the subject was resident, the access to employment opportunities, and the gender constructs of the dominant society.

With regard to the issue of gender construction, it is significant that the study does not address this issue. While the Ottery School of Industries was provided specifically for (‘coloured’) boys, the gender aspects of their experiences at Ottery are not addressed in the text. For that reason, the theoretical analysis of gender is omitted. This is a significant weakness of the study.

Finally, inverted commas are often used in the text to frame terms that have numerous meanings and are linked to the particular ideological assumptions of the reader when faced with the term. The terms are presented in this way to direct the reader to the particular meanings of the terms inferred in the work as a whole, and to indicate that the author is well aware of the problematic and contested nature of the terms used.

'Coloured' as a social construction

Understanding the notion of 'colouredness' would have been a much simpler task had it been assumed that the identity referred to as 'coloured' was simply imposed from above by a 'white' minority government to act as a 'buffer' between the 'white' and 'african' populations of South Africa. This is the way in which the category of 'coloured' has traditionally been presented in South Africa. Clearly, whether imposed or not, group identities of this nature simply did not evolve in such linear or functional ways.

While race has certainly been the single-most and defining feature of the social systems of segregation and apartheid in South Africa during the twentieth century, the explanation for the particular ways in which 'race' has impacted on the formation of particular group identities in South Africa clearly has to also include the social economic history of the development of those identities.

Group identities simply do not evolve in linear or predictable ways. They are not fixed, concrete or objective. Rather, group identities are extremely fluid and constitute unstable and decentred complexes of social meanings that are constantly being transformed.¹⁷ In this regard, different group identities can co-exist, reinforce or cut across each other in complex and unpredictable ways. The formation of group identities is thus a highly contextual process.¹⁸

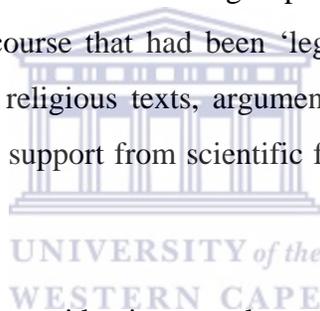
For the study, it was evident from the outset that the Ottery School of Industries was established not only to provide for 'coloured' boys, but also to provide a testing site

¹⁷ Omi, M & Winant, H (1986), *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s*, (New York, Routledge, p.x)

¹⁸ Bickford-Smith, V (1994), 'Ethnicity, Racism and Social Practice: a case study from colonial Cape Town', *Journal of Southern African Studies, 20th Anniversary Conference, September 1994, p.1*; Bickford-Smith is very critical of Lewis' understanding of the formation of group identity as provided earlier in the introduction. See Bickford-Smith, V (1993), 'Slavery, Emancipation and the Question of Coloured Identity, with particular reference to Cape Town, 1875-1910', *The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th Centuries Collected Seminar Papers, Vol.19, No.45, 1993, pp.17-25*

for understanding various policy ideas that were emerging at that time. One such idea posited that the 'coloured' population had to be increasingly included in the administration (or practice) of education, welfare and penal provisions. It was asserted that 'coloured' persons had to be trained in providing social services for the 'coloured' population. Ottery was therefore one of the first testing grounds for the analysis of contrasting views about 'colouredness' as well as an actual training location for 'coloured practitioners. Notably, the debate on the type of policy that was being developed was informed by previous contestations on the issue of 'colouredness' and social relief provision.

At the same time, the formation of this particular 'racial' group identity from 1948 in South Africa was not an accidental element in the history of the country. At the heart of the process of the formation of a group identity for 'coloureds' (as with 'natives') lay a racist discourse that had been 'legitimised' in varying ways over time, whether by specific religious texts, arguments and policies about economic necessities, or by 'neutral' support from scientific findings in anthropology and the eugenics movement.



The development of this group identity was also premised on the existence of more enduring self-identities, which simultaneously provided the development of a 'coloured' 'racial identity' with more content. Enduring self-identities were the product and manifestation of ongoing social and political contestation during the twentieth century. It was based on a long history of 'colouredness' in South Africa.

In this regard, it could well be argued that the development of a 'coloured' group identity from the turn of the twentieth century was part of a process by which 'coloureds' attempted to consolidate and secure rights and privileges that they had previously fiercely contested for. In so doing, many 'coloureds' set themselves apart

from ‘whites and other groups such as ‘natives’.¹⁹ The explanation for this ‘apartness’ may in part have been related to notions of ‘superiority’. However, it is most probable that at such times, by presenting themselves as separate from ‘natives’, ‘coloureds’ sought to protect their relatively advantaged social and economic position among the ‘indigenous’ populations.²⁰

It is asserted that the conceptualisation of ‘colouredness’ by the 1940s was also linked to particular assumptions about persons deemed to be ‘coloured’. The numerous characteristics attributed to such persons (cast in the ‘racist discourse’ of the time) will be dealt with during the various chapters of the thesis and are not outlined here. It is significant however that the development of a ‘coloured’ identity from the 1920s was notably linked to the ways in which the Union Government perceived the roles of ‘coloureds’ in the economic and social order. For example, there is no doubt that the limited efforts of the Union Government from the 1920s to include ‘coloureds’ in the social and economic order led to many ‘advantages’ being accorded to ‘coloured’ men and women in that period. Hertzog noted in 1929 that:

It would be foolish to drive the Coloured people to the enemies of the Europeans. That will happen if we expel him and allow him to eventually come to rest in the arms of the native.²¹

¹⁹ A vivid example of this notion of ‘apartness’ was when at the turn of the century the discourse of urban reform in Cape Town (which was mobilised by the Clean Party) emphasized the need to ‘clean up inner-city slums’. With the bubonic plaque epidemic in Cape Town in 1901, the blame for the spreading of the disease was duly placed on the ‘native’ population of Cape Town. The ‘coloured’ population at the time made every effort to dissociate themselves from ‘natives’ in order that they too not be ‘removed’ and relocated in compounds in outlying areas. The unprecedented ‘attack’ on ‘natives’ dramatically restructured the social geography of the Western Cape at that time. See Van Heyningen, EG (1989), *Public Health and Society in Cape Town 1880 to 1910*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished doctoral thesis, pp.152-160). Also see Swanson, M (1977), ‘The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plaque and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony – 1900-1909’, *Journal of African History*, 18, 3; and Saunders, C (1979), ‘The Creation of Ndabeni’, in Saunders, C (ed), *Studies in the History of Cape Town, Volume 1*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town)

²⁰ Vivian Bickford-Smith has asserted that when “the Cape Town ‘malay’ elite made common political cause with its ‘non-white’ Christian counterpart in Cape Town at the turn of the twentieth century around issues that were deemed important community needs, it made sense that they did so” as ‘coloureds’. See Bickford-Smith (1995), *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, (Johannesburg, Wits University Press, p.193)

²¹ Union of South Africa (1929), *Parliamentary Debates: Joint Sitting of Parliament, 12-15 February 1929*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, column 169). Cited in Goldin, I (1987), *Making Race: The Politics and Economics of Coloured Identity in South Africa*, (Cape Town, Maskew Miller Longman, p.37). Also see Goldin (1987), p.29

Hertzog subsequently proposed mechanisms whereby the 'coloured' population could be "politically, economically and industrially incorporated" into 'white' society.²² The subsequent ways in which the Union Government sought to accomplish this incorporation significantly informed the development of particular ideas within a 'coloured' identity. As is argued in Section C of the thesis, 'colouredness' increasingly became associated with living in the Western Cape where manual labour employment opportunities were reserved for 'coloureds'. This was linked to the 'desire' by the Union Government to 'save' the 'coloured' population not only from dire poverty and lack of work, but also from 'racial mixing' with 'natives'. This was a discourse that had been visible with regard to policies dealing with the perceived needs of 'poor whites' from the 1920s.

As is evident in the narrative of the 'life histories' that are provided in Section C, these policies of exclusion and separation (especially in Cape Town) were not entirely successful in the period before 1970. Not only were the residential and matrimonial separation of 'coloureds' from 'natives' not realised, but the claim that the Western Cape supposedly provided greater labour opportunities for 'coloureds' was also somewhat misleading. Generally, labour opportunities in Cape Town for the 'coloured' poor were limited to manual tasks such as cleaning and garden work. In this regard it is clear that policy intentions and outcomes were significantly different.

It is noteworthy however that after 1948 the National Party-led government proposed policies that sought to rigidly enforce previous policies of segregation. This was in keeping with the ideology of Afrikaner Nationalism that argued that the solution to the social and political problems of a modernist society could best be realised by the rigid separation of the 'races'. This policy goal entailed getting the 'respectable' 'coloured' population involved in solving the social problems of their

²² Goldin (1987), pp.29-30

‘own people’.²³ In relation to the Ottery School of Industries the notion of ‘getting coloureds involved’ meant that ‘coloured’ staff members had to be included to partake in the rehabilitation of ‘coloured’ youth after 1948. This was an intrinsic aspect of apartheid policy with regard to the notion of ‘own affairs’. However, by involving ‘coloured’ members of society in the administration and educational running of the Ottery facility, subsequent policy also introduced unknown social actors and conditions that significantly informed the formulation of the institution thereafter. This is further discussed in section C.

Structure of the thesis

Historical theses are normally structured on a grid of themes and periods. Thus, if the themes are A, B, and C and the periods are 1, 2, and 3, the structure of the thesis would be A1, B1, C1, A2, B2, C2 and A3, B3, C3. Very rarely is the structure of the thesis A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3 and C1, C2, C3. This thesis veers towards the latter model. While the model lends itself to a degree of complexity and repetition there were particular reasons for following the second model.

In its draft form, the thesis was laid out in chronological order starting off with the ‘poor white question’ in the 1890s and ending with the stories of the lives of nine ‘coloured’ informants who were sent to Ottery School of Industries in the period 1948-1970. The establishment of the Ottery School of Industries was located at the back end of the time period and explained in relation to the development of various informing ideas and processes from 1910.

The main problem with that approach was that the story of Ottery got lost in the construction of the overall historical set. By the time the reader got to the central hypotheses of the work, the establishment of the Ottery institution and the lives of the ‘coloured’ boys seemed almost peripheral and out of place. The main points that

²³ Given the overall assertion that there was significant continuity between the policies of the United Party and the National Party in the period under review, it is significant here that a discontinuity

were being made about Ottery in the latter stages of the work were simply overawed by the numerous historical and theoretical arguments that had been made until then. Also, in the back section of the work, the story of the history of the establishment of the Ottery institution in June 1948 (the present section A) didn't fit very well alongside the stories of the boys and their lives at the Ottery facility (the present section C).

A mechanism had to be found to remind the reader that the establishment of the Ottery institution was the main focus of the work. In this regard, the structure of the thesis needed to alert the reader of the main hypothesis of the work, namely that the Ottery institution was conceived in 1948 as a welfare institution for 'coloured' boys but took the form of a 'correctional' institution. The structure of the thesis presented below is the culmination of that exercise. It was decided to separate the various aspects of the work into three larger stories about the Ottery institution. This has led to a fair amount of repetition in the study. The 'trick' to reading the thesis is thus to treat the three sections as separate but interconnected explanations for the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in June 1948. This is the main and crucial crutch that is provided for the reader.

Notably, Section C is the crux of the work. It describes the lives of nine 'boys' who were sent to the 'correctional institution' at Ottery in the period 1948 to 1970 and explores the impact of the social institution on the lives of 'coloured' boys in that period. The main theoretical hypothesis about 'coloured' boys at that time claimed that because 'coloureds' were supposedly 'inherently criminogenic', their social and welfare needs could best be addressed at institutions where they could be 'treated' for and 'cured' of their anti-social behaviour. These ideas and processes were linked to notions that the majority of 'coloured' boys at that time had low IQ levels, that the majority of 'coloured' boys were either poorly schooled or unschooled, and that they required particular and limited kinds of training to prepare them for the types of

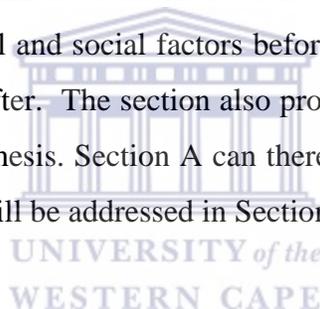
under apartheid was the assertion that 'coloureds' manage their 'own affairs' as part of the policy of the separation of the 'races'.

work that they would most likely secure once released from state care. This conceptualisation of how to deal with the needs of indigent ‘coloured’ boys led to the criminalisation of many non-delinquent ‘coloured’ boys in that period. That is the main story that is being told.

The Thesis

The three Sections of the thesis each adopts a different approach to understanding the social institution provided at Ottery in 1948.

Section A adopts a historical approach where the various ideas, processes and constituencies that informed the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in Plantation Road, Ottery, Cape Town in June 1948 are outlined. The social foundations of the establishment of the institution are analysed here to reflect on the complex mesh of historical and social factors before 1948 that shaped social policy for ‘coloured’ boys thereafter. The section also provides the context for the various debates in the rest of the thesis. Section A can therefore also be regarded as a basic sketch of the terrain that will be addressed in Section B and C.



Section B seeks to problematise the establishment of Ottery in relation to the development of ideas that informed both the programmes provided at the institution and overall social policy in the periods before and after 1948. Located in various social arenas and academic disciplines, these ideas (in varying degrees) shaped the ways in which professional practitioners addressed the needs of ‘in need of care’ children in the period before 1970. Section B is divided into four chapters that seek to analyse:

Chapter 1: The emergence of penal ideas and practices that informed the provision of educational institutions to deal with the needs of both pre-delinquent and indigent children;

Chapter 2: The emergence of industrial schools in South Africa at the turn of the twentieth century that provided the crucial ideas and contexts for state intervention in the lives of ‘coloured’ boys from 1948;

Chapter 3: The development of social policy with regard to the mental health needs of the indigent and the delinquent. Via the development of

psychological testing, the needs of indigent and delinquent children were increasingly medicalised from the 1920s;

Chapter 4: The history of the provision of trade training facilities in South Africa, and how this history informed the provision of trade training facilities in ‘correctional’ institutions for ‘coloured’ boys after 1948.

Section C focuses on the social institution at Ottery, and when dealing with the Ottery institution is essentially divided into two parts. Part One focuses on the complex relationship between childcare policy, social institutions and ‘coloured’ boys and draws on the life histories of nine ‘coloured’ informants to reveal insights that would otherwise not be attainable. Part Two focuses on the development of the social institution at Ottery from 1948 and suggests that the way in which the social institution was constituted at the Ottery School of Industries played a fundamental role in shaping the parameters of the lives of ‘coloured’ boys. It is argued that Ottery was one of the sites in that period from which the experience of providing ‘welfarist’ and ‘correctional’ facilities helped to shape subsequent social policy for the ‘coloured’ population of South Africa.

Finally, with regard to the length of the thesis, it is notable that Afrikaans quotes are included in their original form, along with an English translation, to provide a level of authenticity. This is one of the main reasons why the thesis is longer than is expected.

Section A:
Introducing the
Ottery School of
Industries



Introduction

Schools of Industries are state ‘correctional’ institutions that were established by the Union Government of South Africa during the twentieth century to care for children deemed by the Children’s Courts (attached to the Justice System) to be ‘in need of care’.²⁴ Committal to a school of industries was not a penal sentence. Rather, an order to be detained in a school of industries was “given solely in the best interests of the child, with no idea of punishment.”²⁵

Schools of Industries have their origin in the international industrial school movement that developed from the turn of the century onwards. When the administration of the Children’s Act was transferred to the Union Education Department in 1917, the education department made a distinction between trade schools and industrial schools for indigent and ‘in need of care’ children by referring to the latter as government industrial schools. In 1944 all government industrial schools were renamed schools of industries. It is unclear why these institutions were renamed in 1944. It may well be discursively linked to the secondary industry rapid growth of that period, to ‘advances’ made in industrial school policy by that time, or simply to remove the confusion among the public regarding the purpose of government industrial schools as compared to trade schools. The Children’s Act of 1960 noted that:

Every industrial school established under the Children’s Act of 1913 and 1937 (Act No.31), or which is deemed to be an industrial school when so established, shall, at the commencement of this (1960) Act, be deemed to be a school of industries established under this Act. Any reference in any law or

²⁴ This is a legal term used to describe a child deemed by the Children’s Court to require state care and supervision. Due to the negligence, indigence or maltreatment in the natural home, the child is then placed in state or private institutions deemed appropriate to his/her needs. See Union of South Africa (1913), *Children’s Protection Act of 1913*, (Pretoria, Government Printer). This Act was amended in 1937, 1960, 1983 and 2000. Also see Section B, Chapter 2

²⁵ This notion was repeated over and over in various court cases dealing with the needs of children from 1920. See Attorney-General, Transvaal, v. Additional Magistrate Johannesburg, 1924 A.D.421, and Seillier v. Seillier and Another, 1935 N.P.D.648. These cases were cited by TH Reenen to emphasise that the main purpose of the Children’s Protection Act of 1913 was the protection of the interests of children. See Van Reenen, TH (1953), *Handbook on the Children’s Act*, (Durban, Butterworth and Co. Ltd, p.4 and p.57)

document to a government industrial school shall be construed as a reference to a school of industries established under this Act.²⁶

In this study, when reference is made to schools of industries before 1948 the term 'government industrial schools' is used.²⁷

The Ottery School of Industries was established on a military camp in Plantation Road, Ottery, Cape Town, in June 1948. It was the first school of industries for 'coloured' boys. This section (A) will identify the diverse ideas and processes that informed Union Government policy concerning children until that time and which led to the establishment of the Ottery institution in 1948. It is argued that the various ideas and processes were shaped by complex social and political circumstances in South Africa at that time. The discussion will include an analysis of the reasons why a school of industries was specifically established for 'coloured' boys in the late 1940s and focus on the degree to which the question of race influenced the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in 1948.

The Establishment of the First School of Industries for 'Coloured' Boys

The Ottery School of Industries stands as a kind of 'monument' to the efforts and influences of five constituencies, whose interaction led to the establishment of the institution in 1948. The five constituencies were:

- 1) The Union Education Department (UED);
- 2) The Coloured Advisory Council (CAC);
- 3) The Porter Reformatory;
- 4) The Central Organisation for Technical Training (COTT);
- 5) Other minor 'constituencies'.

²⁶ Republic of South Africa (1960), *The Children's Act of 1960*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.33)

²⁷ See Section B, Chapter 4

This does not imply that the efforts of these constituencies resulted in the establishment of the Ottery institution. Rather, the ideas and efforts of these ‘groupings’ provided a conceptual map or grid that shaped the response of the Union Government in the 1940s to the numerous calls for social ‘upliftment’ programmes for the ‘coloured’ population.²⁸

In order to reconstruct the events that led to the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in 1948, it is necessary to analyse the process of change in the 1940s both in terms of the discontinuities in industrial school policy and “the evidence of deeper continuities.”²⁹ Such an approach would also help to appreciate the depth of the Ottery institution’s social foundations.

In this period, the five constituencies presented strong cases for the establishment of institutions for ‘coloured’ children, especially the ‘coloured’ destitute who were deemed to be ‘in need of care’³⁰ yet was not being attended to in terms of the Children’s Act of 1937. These constituencies in various ways drew attention to the perceived needs of ‘coloured’ children (by the Union Government).

1. The Union Education Department

The role of the Union Education Department in the establishment of government industrial schools from 1917 will be further explored in Section B, Chapter 2. In order to understand why the first government industrial school for ‘coloured’ boys was established in 1948, it is necessary to analyse the Union Education

²⁸ Significantly, the Union Education Department also sought to provide a school of industries for ‘african’/ ‘native’ boys in the late 1940s. It was first suggested that the first ‘african’ school of industries would be established in 1947 on a military camp in Lenz, just outside Johannesburg. However, the suggested development never materialised. This issue will be addressed later in the section.

²⁹ For an analysis of the way in which to engage with penal policy, see Garland, D (1986), “The punitive mentality: its socio-historic development and decline”, *Contemporary Crises* 10, p.306 (1986)

³⁰ The process whereby children were institutionalised from 1913 will be explained in Section B, Chapter 2

Department's industrial school policy until that time, and to interrogate the conditions just prior to the 1940s that impacted on the development of this policy.

It is clear that Union Education Department policy from 1948 with regard to the establishment of more schools of industries was informed by the experience of providing and administering government industrial schools and trade schools for 'poor whites' until that time. The first principal of the Ottery School of Industries, FA Bester, noted that:

Op 1 Januarie 1948 is die Ottery Nywerheidskool as kind van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap gebore en kragtens sy geboorte op die lees van bestaande nywerheidskole geskoei. In die volgende tien jaar tot Oktober 1958 het hierdie inrigting tot volwassendheid gegroei en die geekte patroon van hierdie soort Kinderwet-inrigting aangeneem. Die Departement van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap was in hierdie opsig 'n ervare liggaam wat beskik het oor 'n wye ervaring van die beheer, administrasie en funksionering van hierdie soort skool. Dit is ook dan vanselfsprekend dat op dieselfde grondslae voortgebou sou word sedert oornam deur Kleurlingsake op 1/10/1958 wat voortgeduur het tot op 1/4/1964. (*On the 1st January 1948 the Ottery School of Industries was born to the Union Department of Education, Art and Science. Upon its inception it was built on the groundwork already laid by existing schools of industries. In the following ten years till October 1958 this institution grew considerably until it took on the form of these kinds of Children's Act-institutions. In this regard, by 1948 the Union Education Department was experienced in the administration, control and functioning of this type of institution. It is taken for granted that, with the transfer of the institution to the Department of Coloured Affairs on 1/10/1958, the institution will continue to build on this groundwork.*)³¹

During the 1890s the Dutch Reformed Church had established several industrial schools as part of their efforts to address and alleviate 'white' poverty, particularly in the rural areas. The first industrial school was established at Uitenhage in 1895, which only 'white' children of parents certified as indigent were allowed to attend. By 1909, some of these institutions were transformed into facilities that EG Malherbe has described as "more or less like reformatories that catered for destitute and neglected children likely to fall into crime."³² Chisholm has noted that these

³¹ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.2585, Ref:7/33/10/D10, 'Prinsipaalverslae- 1960-1965', Principal Report of January 1965, p.25

³² Malherbe, EG (1977), *Education in South Africa, Volume II*, (Cape Town, p.164)

institutions had a distinctly penal character and “in practice became a halfway house between the school and the reformatory.”³³ In the period just after Union in 1910 the Department of Justice was responsible for the legislative control and administration of government industrial schools.

Government industrial schools emerged at that time in relation to the political, economic and social agendas of that period. The establishment of such institutions were informed by issues relating to ‘white’ indigence, the supposed exposure of children of the ‘white poor’ to crime and delinquency, and the provision of mechanisms to provide employment for the ‘white’ population.³⁴

The political agenda focused on addressing the increased ‘racial mixing’ between ‘white’ and ‘non-white’ in urban centres and their joint participation in a range of illicit activities. At the time, it was argued that the Afrikaner ‘poor whites’ were being exposed to social and economic conditions in urban areas that would undermine the Afrikaner Nationalist project. There were also many initiatives that sought to resolve the plight of ‘poor whites’ in rural areas in that period.

Firstly, there was concern that the social mode of existence of the poor whites and the various forms of class practice derived therefrom, threatened to undermine particular structures through which social control was exerted over the African dominated classes. Secondly, there was the concern that ‘poor whiteism’ was a factor detracting from the capacity of the power bloc to organise the supportive and allied classes that it needed to maintain its dominance.³⁵

The social agenda focused on the protection of ‘white’ children from the “evil and insidious influences of a diseased society, from unnatural and vicious homes, and the temptations of the streets” by institutionalising those deemed to require ‘alternative care’ in industrial schools. Industrial schools were meant to shelter

³³ Chisholm, L (1989), *Reformatories and Industrial Schools in South Africa: A Study in Class, Colour and Gender, 1882-1939*, (Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand: unpublished doctoral dissertation, p.58)

³⁴ Davies, R (1979), *Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa, 1900-1960: An Historical Materialist Analysis of Class Formation and Class Relations*, (Brighton, pp.97-143)

³⁵ Davies (1979), p.78

‘white’ children, “nurture them physically, morally, intellectually, and as far as possible vocationally, and equip them as men and women, competent to fulfil intelligently and honourably their duties as citizens, as well as builders of comfortable and happy homes.”³⁶ This approach had its origins in a puritanical view of life.

The economic agenda focused on the provision of trade training for the ‘white’ unskilled and unemployed that would not only facilitate their employment, but also teach them ‘the habits of work’. In this regard, the provision of work training was regarded as the required ‘medicine’ for all anti-social behaviour. Alongside the provision of housing, schooling and welfare relief, work training was regarded by the ‘architects’ of reconstruction in the early 1900s as important ways of stabilising the ‘white’ working classes at that time.

Also, the Secretary of the Union Education Department noted in 1917 that government industrial schools were established after the Union Government recognised its responsibility to neglected and ‘criminally tainted’ ‘white’ children.

These children owed their condition, among other things, to the fateful operation of the laws of hereditary and environment, especially the latter. Under environment might be included for our purpose the general social and economic conditions of the time. Things have gone wrong with the children, because they have first of all gone wrong with society, with the homes that constitute the community. In this connection I cannot but emphasise, in passing, the close relationship between crime and poverty.³⁷

In this regard, the Children’s Protection Act of 1913 provided what was deemed to be an important mechanism to regulate children found to be poor and ‘prone to anti-social behaviour’. The passing of the Act in 1913 was perceived to represent a significant ‘increase in humanitarianism’ by the Union Government towards ‘unfortunate’ children and their plight at that time. The efforts of the Union Government in providing state mechanisms to protect and provide for children was

³⁶ Union of South Africa (1918), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1917- G68ED (EDUC)(1917)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.75)

regarded as a clear indication of the gradual progression from the barbarism of pre- and early industrialisation to the humane and responsible practices of the modern state.³⁸

In 1917 the administration of the Children's Protection Act was transferred to the Union Education Department. As one of the main concerns of the Children's Protection Act at that time focused on the problem of juvenile delinquency, this transfer of responsibility represented an important change in the concept and perception of the treatment of juvenile delinquency in South Africa.³⁹ It indicated in the early decades of the twentieth century a growing confidence in the reformative and transformative value of education. The provision of education and trade training in 'correctional' institutions was regarded here as mechanisms to re-form the 'characters' of wayward children, to turn them into industrious workers, and to teach them the value of work and discipline.

At that time trade schools and government industrial schools were only provided for 'white' children. The Union Education Department after 1917 had campaigned vigorously for the establishment of a government industrial school for 'coloured'

³⁷ *G68ED (EDUC)(1917)*, p.73

³⁸ There were many other legislative acts in the period after Union in 1910 that also influenced the development of child-care policy. Between 1910 and 1920 these were the Adoption Act, the Hostels and Reformatories Act, and later amendments to the Children's Protection Act (in the period 1921-1923). The latter amended Act enabled the Union Government in the 1920s to contribute towards the "maintenance of destitute children in their own homes, thus avoiding unnecessary institutionalisation". See Union of South Africa (1940), *Report of the Department of Social Welfare for the period 1937 to 1939 - G68ED(SOCI)1940*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.43). Also see Platt, A (1977), *The Child Savers: the Invention of Delinquency*, (Chicago)

³⁹ Van Reenen, TH (1953), *Handbook on the Children's Act*, (Durban, Butterworth and Co, p.3). Chisholm has noted that in the period after the passing of the 1913 Act, the Children's Aid Society on the Witwatersrand strongly agitated that industrial schools had to be turned into places where artisan training could take place. As far as the Society was concerned, administration of such schools by the Prisons Department was the major stumbling block to the appropriate education and training of 'poor white' children. The Children's Aid Society asserted that penal discipline as exercised in reformatories and industrial schools was repressive and antagonistic to the reforming principles underlying their establishment. The Society thus made representations to Jacob De Villiers Roos (Director of Prisons) to remove the administration of these institutions from the Prisons Department to the Union Education Department. This type of pressure, alongside "incontestable evidence that industrial schools should be equipping their charges with 'skills' suitable for the labour market", ensured the transfer of industrial schools to the Union Education Department in 1917. See Chisholm, L (1989), pp.103-132

boys. Given the political nature of industrial school provision however, it was only in the 1940s that conditions became 'conducive' for the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries. In the late 1930s three processes directly informed the provision of the Ottery institution.

- a) The amendment in 1937 of the Children's Protection Act of 1913;
- b) The development of a Union Department of Social Welfare in 1937;
- c) The publication of the Wilcocks Commission Report⁴⁰ of 1937 on its findings with regard to conditions among the 'coloured' population.

a) *"I want not your body, but your mind".*

The amendment in 1937 of the Children's Protection Act of 1913

As was noted earlier, the role of the Union Education Department in the development of industrial schools in South Africa, and the way it interacted with various aspects of the Children's Protection Act of 1913 will be explored in greater detail in other parts of the dissertation. A brief sketch of the development of Union Education Department policy is provided here to indicate the complex ways in which ideas and processes in a variety of non-educational fields meshed with the provision of child care facilities for children deemed to be 'in need of care'.

In the period 1917 to 1934, the Union Education Department administered government industrial schools in much the same way it administered its trade schools. In 1934 however the control of reformatories was transferred to the Union Education Department from the Department of Prisons. This was closely followed in 1935 by the transfer of Probation Services to the Union Education Department. At this time Union Education Department policy with regard to government industrial schools proved inadequate for the supervision of all destitute, dependent, neglected, abused, delinquent, and other maladjusted children, and had to be somewhat revised. It became apparent in the early 1930s that new legislation and the consolidation of existing legislation concerning children so classified, was required.

In 1934 an *Interdepartmental Committee on Destitute, Neglected, Maladjusted and Delinquent Children and Young Persons* was appointed to evaluate child-care policy and to offer 'solutions' to deal with the problem of juvenile delinquency. The deliberations of the committee culminated in the passing of an amended Children's Act, No.31 of 1937. As was noted by the Secretary of the Union Education Department in 1938, the amended Act also represented the considerable advances that had been made over twenty-five years, both in South Africa and overseas, "in the theory and practice of child and juvenile welfare"⁴¹.

One the most important divergences from the previous Children's Protection Act was the notion that all neglected children demonstrated tendencies to become delinquent.⁴² This was the first time in South Africa that Union Government policy sanctioned the official meshing of delinquency with poverty. This development was closely linked to the increased influence of 'scientific knowledge' on education policy at that time. The Secretary for Education asserted in 1938 that the two problems of neglect and delinquency were inseparable and constituted a unity that were related to each other as cause and effect.

Psychologically, there are no basic differences between a non-delinquent uncontrollable child and a child who has committed an offence. They both belong to the psychological group known as maladjusted, and as the causes of their maladjustment is the same, the methods of treatment should largely be similar.⁴³

⁴⁰ Union of South Africa (1937), *Report of the Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Cape Coloured Population of the Union of 1937- G 68EUG 54/37 (hereafter referred to as the Wilcocks Commission)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, pp.20-21)

⁴¹ Union Of South Africa (1938), *Annual Report of the Department of Education for 1937- UG 51-1938*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.33)

⁴² The Superintendent of Social Welfare and Probation Services, L.Van Schalkwyk, noted in 1937 that there was no essential psychological difference between the child who has fallen foul of the law and the child who has developed anti-social tendencies as a result of neglect and destitution. Van Schalkwyk asserted that the behaviour of both was *symptomatic of similar environmental factors* and consequently required *similar forms of treatment*. His views came to inform the way in which the Johannesburg municipality came to address the problems of juvenile delinquency thereafter. See Van Schalkwyk, L (1938), "Penal and Corrective Agencies" in South African Institute of Race Relations (eds), *Minutes of a Conference on Urban Juvenile Native Delinquency held in Johannesburg in October 1938*, (Johannesburg, SAIRR).

⁴³ See UG 51-1938, p.33. Also, in a government report of 1938 it was asserted that "as in medicine and other forms of social service, the causal-preventive aspect is being increasingly stressed in the

From the 1930s onwards the language of ‘intervention’, at various levels both inside and outside the state, focused on the word ‘maladjustment’. This was common to most international policy debates at that time. The task of education in responding to this ‘maladjustment’ was to act as an integrating force. Reformatories, government industrial schools, hostels, and probation services were then understood to be the means whereby the delinquent, the neglected, the orphaned and the maltreated were to be rehabilitated and re-educated via the developing sciences.

By this time psychology and the mental hygiene movement had made formidable strides in South Africa.⁴⁴ Minister JH Hofmeyr noted in the House of Assembly in 1937 that the Union Education Department no longer believed in palliative measures, “but sought to permanently remove, via methods known to psychology and mental hygiene, the factors that led to crime.”⁴⁵ This statement by Hofmeyr was indicative of the way in which the belief in the ‘scientific method’ became intertwined in complex ways with social and economic agendas at that time. Hofmeyr was after all at that time one of the most visible social reformers within the South African Party who was fully committed to the structural reform of the social and economic systems of the Union Government.⁴⁶

measures dealing with juvenile delinquency and neglect.” See Union of South Africa (1938), *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Destitute, Neglected, Maladjusted and Delinquent Children and Young persons, 1934 to 1937- UG38/1937*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p. 7)

⁴⁴ JA Grobler has contended that the “fundamental connection between dependency and delinquency found its confirmation in the practice and results of psychology and psychiatry. For the purposes of combating irregular behaviour, penal law and punishment was therefore of secondary importance”. See Grobler, JA (1938), *Juvenile Delinquency in South Africa*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished doctoral dissertation, p.123)

⁴⁵ Union of South Africa (1937), *House of Assembly Debates, 1 March 1937*, as cited by Grobler (1938), p.119

⁴⁶ Paton, A (1964), *Hofmeyr*, (Cape Town, Oxford University Press, pp.187-216)

The advance of science,⁴⁷ and particularly IQ testing, came to play a vital role in the development of a new technique of ‘surveillance’ in the 1930s, and invested in specialists and professionals (especially educationalists) scientific authority to intervene in the lives of both delinquent and non-delinquent children. These were not just South African phenomena. In Section B, Chapter 1, Foucault’s assertions about the increased role of professionals and other specialists are outlined with regard to the focus on social control at the end of the nineteenth century.⁴⁸ A new emphasis on the ‘mind’ of the ‘offender’ in the 1930s thus reflected a demonstrable shift in emphasis by the Union Education Department and was closely linked to other developments⁴⁹ taking place in South Africa, and the world, at the time.

The period 1924 to 1934 also witnessed decisive ‘advances’ in the co-ordination of a welfare system alongside attempts to professionalise social work. This led to the establishment of the Department of Social Welfare on the 1st October 1937, to which the administration of the Children’s Act was subsequently transferred. Government industrial schools and reformatories remained the responsibility of the Union Education Department as these institutions were regarded as essentially educational institutions in which a large proportion of the programme consisted of schooling and

⁴⁷ Saul Dubow has argued that the decades leading up to the Second World War were a ‘great age of buoyant positivism’ and ‘a period in which the perfectibility of mankind was often seen as coterminous with the advance of science and reason’. In citing the work of Michael Biddiss (*The Age of the Masses: Ideas and Society since 1870*, 1977) and G.R Searle, Dubow asserted that the early twentieth century cult of ‘national efficiency’ was transformed in Britain in the 1930s into a strongly ‘technocratic’ approach to government, which envisaged science as an autonomous force providing “objectively valid solutions to social and political problems”. Dubow further claimed that the “biologised racism prevalent in the South African context could be seen as a powerful variant of this naive faith in the dispassionate virtue and transforming power of positivist science”. See Dubow, S (1995), *Illicit Union: Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*, (Johannesburg, Wits University Press, p.14)

⁴⁸ Foucault, M (1977), *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, (Aylesbury, Hazell Watson and Vinney Ltd)

⁴⁹ In this period there was an expansion in the provision of psychological services, the establishment of social welfare services, and child guidance clinics. Andrea Hay asserts that the child guidance clinic located in Mowbray, Cape Town and attached to the University of Cape Town, was a site for the assessment and intervention of ‘problem white children’ and their families from the 1940s. Assessments were conducted primarily by a group of ‘experts/specialists’, who viewed “any ‘behavioural aberration, be it difficult or unstable behaviour such as nervousness, excessive emotionality or lying, in terms of ‘maladjustment’.” See Hay, A (1991), “*The Child Guidance Clinic 1935-1971*”, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished Masters dissertation in psychology, p.45)

vocational training.⁵⁰ The transfer of the Children's Act to the Department of Social Welfare did however place greater emphasis on the role of social work in "re-adjusting the child in the environment in which they showed the need for re-adjustment."⁵¹ This required a close interaction between the Union Education and Social Welfare Departments.

Also, the placing of the Children's Courts on a legal basis in this period introduced 'special courts' which were required to "ascertain the guilt of the child" (as in the open legal court), as well as to "investigate the root causes of his/her maladjustment". "Instead of a sentence, the court was required to apply measures aimed at the social reconstruction of the child and the home."⁵² This required a similarly close relationship between the courts and social workers.

The amended Children's Act of 1937 proposed a three-tiered-layer system to provide a gradual means of re-adjustment to the life of the community. The Act emerged as a significant consolidation of the graded welfare and institutional programmes that were brought into being for 'white' juveniles after the First World War and extended under the Pact government.

From 1937 Union Education Department policy in relation to government industrial schools focused on the "unorganised home and environment" which, it was believed, was "the breeding ground for the germs of the different types of conflict leading to delinquency". Moreover, it was argued that the 'maladjusted family' was incorrectly orientated against law and order, private property, work, recreation and

⁵⁰ The functions of the Department of Social Welfare comprised of the control of private institutions, the after-care of children and young persons released from institutions (including reformatories and industrial schools), the supervision of direct committals from the courts to private non-institutional care, as well as adoptions and probation services. Probation services were likewise extended and re-organised in order to liase more efficiently with other societies and institutions. See Union of South Africa (1940), *Annual Report of the Department of Social Welfare for the period 1937 to 1939*, (Pretoria, Government Printer)

⁵¹ Penal Reform League of South Africa (1948), *Community and Crime, no.2, 1948*, as cited in Chisholm (1989), p.314

⁵² Van Reenen, (1953), p.6

religion.⁵³ The amended Children's Act of 1937 provided particular ideas and experiences that the Union Education Department drew upon when it endeavoured to establish government industrial schools for 'non-white' children after the Second World War.

*B. "Look to your surroundings for the causes of delinquency".
The establishment of the Department of Social Welfare*

The establishment of the Department of Social Welfare in 1937 served to underline "the determination of the Union Government to supplement private philanthropic programmes with collective social security measures (underpinned by the public purse),"⁵⁴ and also to focus on the problem of 'maladjustment'⁵⁵ in a comprehensive manner. In this regard, the Department of Social Welfare sought to co-ordinate private and state charitable and rehabilitative initiatives and their methods of relief in more organised ways. The provision of the Department of Social Welfare was also linked to efforts to 'treat' the special needs of every single individual child within the confines of their respective home environments. This was derived from one of the professed functions of the Department of Social Welfare.

The function of this Department is to rehabilitate the socially unadjusted or poorly adjusted individual or family via the study and treatment of the conditions that may produce or may contribute to social maladjustment.⁵⁶

The focus on the home environment of the child was informed by three further factors. The Secretary for the Department of Social Welfare asserted in 1937 that:

- i) Almost 96% of all children considered to be 'in need of care' in 1937 were either maltreated, neglected or abandoned;
- ii) 79% of these children were returned to their homes after investigation;⁵⁷

⁵³ Chisholm (1989), p.315

⁵⁴ Union of South Africa (1940), *Report of the Department of Social Welfare for 1937 to 1939*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.4)

⁵⁵ Heathcote provides a useful analysis of the term 'social maladjustment'. See Heathcote, F (1981), "Social Disorganisation Theories", in Fitzgerald M, McLennan G, and Pawson J (eds), *Crime and Society: Readings in History and Theory*, (London, 1981, pp.341-370)

⁵⁶ Union of South Africa (1940), *Report of the Department of Social Welfare for 1937 to 1939*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.8)

⁵⁷ Union of South Africa (1940), *Report of the Department of Social Welfare for 1937 to 1939*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.47)

- iii) Much of the anti-social behaviour in the child was in any case but a symptom of psychological growth. “The formation of the child’s character is generally traceable to his home life and community environment which may be corrected with a fair chance of success.”⁵⁸

Once the wide social base of the child was identified as the root of youth anti-social behaviour, the anti-social act itself then became only a symptom of the maladjustment of the child. In such cases the causes of delinquent conduct came to be sought not only in the ‘moral realm’ but also in the inadequacies in the home-life, the environment and the personality of the child.⁵⁹

The Department of Social Welfare thus increasingly focused on the social factors within respective communities that might lead to social maladjustment. By adopting a more ‘scientific’ approach in dealing with the problems of juvenile delinquency, the Department of Social Welfare was able to access the wide array of services that had by then become available to ‘treat’ the problem of ‘maladjustment’. Probation services, child guidance clinics, places of safety and detention, and employment bureaus are but a few examples of the alternative services that emerged from the 1930s.

⁵⁸ Union of South Africa (1940), *Report of the Department of Social Welfare for 1937 to 1939*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.48)

⁵⁹ A distinction needs to be made here between a Afrikaner Nationalist author such as WA Willemse and GAC Kuschke, the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and member of the liberal sector within the United Party in the late 1930s. In the Department of Social Welfare Annual Report of 1937-1939, Kuschke acknowledged the significance of work being conducted by Willemse at that time. Both Kuschke’s and Willemse’s ideas (expressed in official texts) in this period showed the influence of social disorganizational theories of crime (‘social maladjustment’), and a revival of the Victorian distinction between the ‘merely poor’ home and the ‘vicious’ home. Discipline and control were regarded as integral to the re-education and re-socialisation of the products of these ‘homes’. However, an emphasis intrinsic to Willemse’s Afrikaner Nationalist writings in this period, but not prevalent in Kuschke’s liberal United Party articulations, was the belief that while ‘visible maladjustments’ were ‘symptoms of intrinsic deficiencies in the home’, innate and hereditary factors (which were then linked to race) were equally important. Willemse linked crime to ‘biology and blood’ and asserted that the “great number of crimes in the ‘coloured’ community reminds one of children and mental defectives”. See Willemse WA and Rademeyer R(1933), *Kriminologie*, (Pretoria, pp.100-102). Also see Willemse, WA (1938), *The Road to the Reformatory*, (Pretoria, van Schaik Ltd). For bibliographical details on WA Willemse, see Van Zyl Smit, D (1989), ‘Adopting and adapting criminological ideas: Criminology and Afrikaner Nationalism in South Africa’, *Contemporary Crises 13: 1989*, pp.238-242

C. "But what did all this have to do with 'coloureds'?"

The Wilcocks Commission of 1937 on conditions affecting the 'coloured' population

There was a growing awareness in the 1930s of the rapid urbanisation of the 'coloured' population. In the period 1921 to 1936 the percentage of the total population of 'coloured' persons in the rural areas of the Union of South Africa had decreased from 54.2% to 46.1%. In the same period, the percentage of 'coloured' persons in urban and peri-urban areas had accordingly increased from 45.8% to 53.9%.⁶⁰

The various members of municipalities in urban centres were very anxious at that time about the large-scale migration of rural 'coloureds' (especially youths) to urban areas.⁶¹ This uncertainty was heightened upon the release of the Wilcocks Commission Report that asserted that a considerable section of the 'coloured' urban population of the Cape⁶² belonged to the 'socially submerged population'. At the time 'coloured' unemployment and impoverishment at the Cape was steadily

⁶⁰ Wilcocks Commission (1938), p.12. For an explanation of this development, see Lewis, G (1987), *Between the Wire and the Wall: a History of South African 'Coloured' Politics*, (Cape Town, David Phillip, p.154)

⁶¹ In the 1930s the worsening socio-economic conditions of 'coloureds' at the Cape attracted the attention of many 'white' liberal clergymen (mostly Anglican) and university academics (and other like-minded individuals). They co-ordinated their attempts to address and 'remedy' the problems of 'coloured' social welfare and unemployment through bodies like the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) and the affiliated Joint Council Movement. Lewis asserts that the Wilcocks Commission was "in itself appointed at the behest of the SAIRR". See Lewis (1987), p.154 and p.171. In Johannesburg, members of a municipal investigation also highlighted the 'danger' presented by rural 'immigrants' at that time. Members of the investigative team recommended at that time that the Union Government make provision for the repatriation of juvenile delinquents and destitute children who had drifted in from homes situated in rural areas". Problems associated with rapid urbanisation were often linked to the absence of 'mechanisms of civilising'. Senator Rheinallt-Jones noted in 1938 that "crimes of violence are not those committed by your town-dwelling, intelligent urban 'native', but by the untutored, uneducated raw 'native' from the rural areas". See SAIRR (1938), *Minutes of a Conference on Urban Juvenile Native Delinquency held by the city of Johannesburg in 1938*, (Johannesburg, SAIRR, p.10), and SAIRR (1939), *Revised Findings and Recommendations of the Bantu Juvenile Delinquency Conference*, (Johannesburg, SAIRR, p.15)

⁶² The Wilcocks Commission noted that the 'coloured' population of Cape Town represented 88.8% of the total 'coloured' population in the Western Cape in 1936. The Commission divided the Cape 'coloured' community roughly into three broad 'classes'. The third category, called the 'submerged population', was said to include the "urban lumpenproletariat, the 'skollies and the undesirables who

increasing. Accentuated by the world wide economic depression in the early 1930s⁶³, this heightened anxiety among Cape ‘whites’ and affluent ‘coloureds’ about the impending threat to social order that these developments posed.⁶⁴

The unfavourable home conditions of this ‘submerged population’, together with “the influences to which the children and youth of the lower strata of the Cape ‘coloured’” were constantly subjected, was seen to “inevitably affect the juvenile delinquency rate. This was further aggravated by the early age at which these children left school, by the dearth of opportunities for learning a trade, or for obtaining employment, by idleness, and by the lack of facilities for wholesome recreation”.⁶⁵

The Commission’s observation as to the high incidence of ‘coloured’ juvenile delinquency⁶⁶ in the congested non-rural areas was supposedly corroborated by statistics which showed 1,980 youthful ‘coloured’ males and 638 youthful ‘coloured’ female delinquents in prison in the period 1928-1935. The Wilcocks Commission noted that this represented a delinquency rate more than nineteen times that of the ‘european’ if the relative sizes of the population were taken into account. This was apparently made all the more disturbing given that the provisions made for the institutionalisation of the ‘european’ delinquent far exceeded those for the ‘coloured’.⁶⁷

As noted before, the transfer of reformatories from the Department of Prisons to the Union Education Department was the most significant ‘advance’ that had been made during this period. In this regard, juvenile delinquency was treated less as a matter

fitted ‘white’ stereotypes about the ‘Capey’ ”. See Wilcocks Commission (1938), pp.10-13. Also see Lewis (1987), p.164.

⁶³ Lewis (1987), p.150

⁶⁴ See Stedman-Jones, G (1971), *Outcast London: A Study in the Relationship between Classes in Victorian London*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp.285-6)

⁶⁵ The Wilcocks Commission (1938), pp.20-21

⁶⁶ In a conference paper delivered at the Johannesburg conference of 1938, Dr. R Phillips asserted juvenile delinquency was an ‘ever-present and major problem’ that emerged “wherever there were rapid changes taking place in the social life of peoples”. See SAIRR (1938), p.14

of mere punishment. While emphasising the increased role of education in dealing with the needs of 'coloured' children, the Wilcocks Commission warned however that the ranks of the 'coloured' adult offenders and criminals were still being swelled from the youth of the oncoming generation, and that urgent preventative work was needed among the 'coloured' youth. The Commission observed in 1937 that the Department of Railways and Harbours⁶⁸ had developed a system of 'coloured' 'training' camps that provided valuable and practical ways for counteracting the coterminous influences of street gambling, intemperance, dagga smoking, vice and delinquency in general. These anti-social traits were supposedly common features of the social lives of the coloured 'submerged class'. The Wilcocks Commission asserted that the programmes of such camps would inculcate 'coloured' boys with 'much needed' discipline and self-control.⁶⁹

Furthermore, the "unstable family life of the lower strata of the Cape Coloured" was identified as a 'site' of drunkenness and crime which, it was feared, 'coloured' children considered to be normal.⁷⁰ The home conditions of the 'typically coloured family' were characterised as unruly, unkempt and displaying weak family

⁶⁷ Wilcocks Report (1938), p.20

⁶⁸ The Wilcocks Commission observed in 1937 that the Department of Railways and Harbours was establishing a camp at Kimberley for the training of selected 'coloured' men for better class labouring work in the service of that department. This training was to be divided into physical training and vocational training (practical railway work) and would last for a period of six to twelve months. The Commission argued that a greater number of such initiatives were needed. See Wilcocks Commission (1938), p.22. Also see later section on the Centre for Technical Training (COTT), which also explored a programme with similar goals.

⁶⁹ With regard to issues linked to 'self control', the Wilcocks Commission asserted in 1938 that "there are sections of the Coloured population that are unable to exercise sufficient self control. It is a matter of common knowledge in South Africa that alcoholism is a major cause of the submersion of a considerable portion of the Cape Coloured people". The Commission regarded intemperance and the lack of self control as the main causes of the physical and moral deterioration of the 'coloured' population, which reduced their efficiency, detrimentally affected their chances of employment, and minimised their wage earning capacity". See Wilcocks Commission (1938), p.24

⁷⁰ Attorney of the Supreme Court of South Africa, Fanny Gross, asserted in 1944 that it is "not unusual for the Coloured children to be taught to beg and steal at home. In keeping with the moral standards of the immediate neighbourhood, Coloured children suffer from no social opprobrium, and so the deterrent effect that social disapproval might exert is lost". In his foreword to her book, Judge FET Krause asserted that Gross proved conclusively that the proper and 'scientific' treatment of 'non-european' anti-social citizens was for the benefit of the community as a whole. Noting the enormous strides made by the mental and social sciences, he stressed the need to ascertain

discipline. The relations between parents and children were regarded as loose, where children showed little attachment to their home or their parents.⁷¹ The Wilcocks Commission Report showed very little faith in the ability of the parents that belonged to “the lower strata” ‘coloured’ population to provide for their children.⁷² Institutionalisation was invariably touted as a means of ‘saving’ the ‘submerged coloured child’ from unfavourable home circumstances.⁷³

The main contribution of the Wilcocks Commission Report to the development of social institutions for ‘coloured’ children in that period was the link it made between the “coterminous influences” of the ‘coloured’ home and the juvenile delinquency rate of ‘coloured’ youth crime. Indicative of the complex ideas which informed much of policy making at that time, the Wilcocks Commission also asserted in 1937 that the ‘undesirable’ home conditions of the ‘coloured’ population emanated mostly from the extremely unfavourable circumstances to which large sections of the ‘coloured’ population were subjected.

d) Responses to the Wilcocks Report

If anything, the findings of the Wilcocks Commission Report demonstrated how little things had improved for ‘coloureds’ since the 1890s, and reflected the limited opportunities for advancement open to the ‘coloured’ population. The findings of the Commission on the full extent of ‘coloured’ socio-economic decline also served to emphasise the failure of ‘coloured’ political mobilisation from the turn of the century to improve the social conditions of the majority of ‘coloured’ people. The subsequent attempts to address and alleviate the appalling levels of ‘coloured’

‘scientifically’ the causes of the downfall of the anti-social citizen, especially the ‘coloured’. See Gross FA (1944), *Society and the Criminal*, (Cape Town, Stewart Printing, p.49).

⁷¹ Wilcocks Commission (1938), p.19

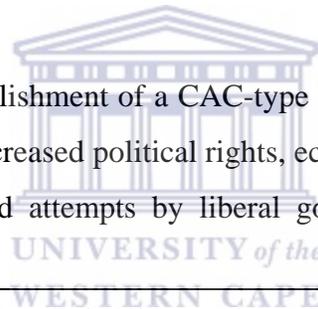
⁷² Wilcocks Commission (1938), p.30. Also see Willemse and Rademeyer (1933), pp.108-114

⁷³ The Wilcocks Commission asserted in 1938 that the “sound principle of removing the juvenile delinquent from the environment in which his anti-social tendencies were developed, was best exemplified by the various systems of indenture.” See Wilcocks Commission (1938), p.21. For statistics as to the number of institutionalised non-delinquents in the Union, see Central Archives (Pretoria), *SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/ Part 1, “Correspondence between Secretary of Union*

poverty⁷⁴ (while in opposition to segregationary measures in principle) increasingly took *the form of practical endeavours* which heightened perceptions (generally) of ‘coloureds’ as a separate and distinct ‘ethnic’ group with unique problems of its own.

In the early 1940s, many liberals in the Senate such as Rheinallt-Jones, Edgar Brookes and FS Malan asserted that special Joint Committees of ‘coloureds’ and ‘whites’ (in co-ordination with the relevant government departments) needed to be established to oversee and devote special attention to the social welfare of the ‘coloured’ people. While they stressed that such committees would not apparently be used to segregate ‘coloureds’ in any way⁷⁵, the idea of a separate council turned into a Frankenstein for ‘white’ liberals with the establishment of the Coloured Advisory Council in 1943.⁷⁶

While the aim of the establishment of a CAC-type body might have been to placate ‘coloured’ demands for increased political rights, economic opportunities, and social welfare reforms, concerted attempts by liberal government officials to convince



Education and Van Antwerp, Principal of the Porter Reformatory, letters dated 25 February 1946 and 11 June 1946

⁷⁴ Edward Batson argued that the exceptional features of urban ‘coloured’ poverty appeared to be: (i) its great extent; (ii) its marked dependence upon the restriction of ‘coloured’ labour to very low-paid employment; and (iii) the magnitude rather than the nature of its consequences. See Batson E (1942), “A contribution to the study of Urban Coloured Poverty”, *Race Relations, Volume IX, No.1, 1942*. See also Rev. J.H.Schalkwyk (1945), “The cultural background of housing: The Cape Coloured People”, in Cape Co-ordinating Council of Social Welfare Organisations (eds), *Social Aspects of Housing: Report Series No.7*, (Cape Town, pp.9-11)

⁷⁵ Liberals in the 1930s repeatedly emphasised their opposition to Hertzogian segregation. While many of the objections reflected a confused liberal and mission disenchantment with the direction of (Hertzogian) segregation, liberals generally acknowledged that existing segregation limited the adoption of ‘alternative’ policies. See Krige, S (1993), “Should Education Lead or Follow the Social Order? The Welsh Report and the Policy of Segregation: 1935-1940”, *South African Historical Journal* 28 (1993), p.150-152. Also see Dubow, S (1989), *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, 1919-1936*, (New York, pp.8-9)

⁷⁶ Lewis has noted that those “involved in the Council later declared that the Coloured Advisory Council was the outcome of successive recommendations by the South African Institute of Race Relations”. See Lewis (1987), p.173. For a discussion of the CAC, see Villa-Vicencio, H (1995), *Colour, Citizenship and Constitutionalism: An Oral History of Political Identity among Middle-class Coloured People with Special Reference to the Formation of the Coloured Advisory Council in 1943 and the Removal of the Male Franchise in 1956*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished Masters dissertation)

other officials that the formation of the CAC did not threaten the Union Government's overall segregation policy and therefore should not overly alarm 'whites'. The policies of the United Party at that time certainly represented an ambiguous approach to the needs of 'non-whites'. While many members of the United Party were generally opposed to rigid segregation, they also believed that the problems of various 'race groups' could best be resolved by adopting separate approaches. Gavin Lewis has noted that:

However well meaning the UP government was regarding the CAC as a means of advancing 'coloured' social welfare, its segregationist sentiments were clearly evident both before and after the announcement of the Council. It was 'white' liberals, *along with pragmatic 'coloured' leaders*, who often unwittingly allowed their concern for the urgent need for government action to relieve the desperate poverty of many 'coloureds' to overcome any reservations they may have held about singling out 'coloureds' as a separate group apart from 'whites' and 'natives'.⁷⁷

Initial support for the CAC⁷⁸ was firmly grounded in the Council securing improved educational facilities, better health and housing services, and improved wage and economic conditions for the 'coloured' population. In fact, notwithstanding the subsequent opposition and agitation against the establishment of the Coloured Advisory Council among the 'coloured' community, this did not prevent the Council from securing reasonable success in redressing certain local grievances.

Despite substantial differences in the political ideologies of radical and moderate middle-class 'coloureds' in that period, both groups approached the needs and problems of the 'coloured' lower classes in much the same way.⁷⁹ Many of the views expressed by the CAC on social matters could in fact be generalised to

⁷⁷ Lewis (1987), p.151

⁷⁸ Many influential 'coloured' political figures were initially inclined to give the CAC 'a chance' based on the support given to these types of bodies by 'white' United Party liberals. The first eight members of the CAC executive (all 'coloured') were APO president, Dr. Gow, S. Dollie (a pharmacist), M De Vries, G Golding, PM Heneke, D van der Ross, SG Maurice, F Hendricks (all TLSA members).

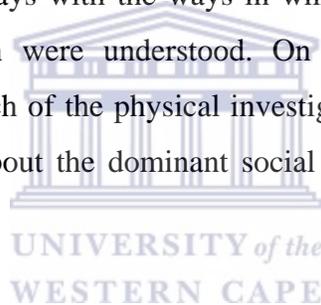
⁷⁹ It could be argued that there were substantive similarities and continuities in the approach by the two groups to issues of 'white' supremacism, to their predicament of marginality, to notions of 'respectability', as well as in the way in which class prejudice manifested itself within their respective ranks. Adhikari, M (1993), "*Let us live for our children*", *The Teacher's League of South Africa, 1913-1940*, (Cape Town, UCT Press/Buchu Books, p.150, also pp. 179-182)

represent a particular perception (of the coloured' middle classes) of 'coloured' life in the Western Cape. This was a view that also often closely resembled that of 'whites'.

Given that the Coloured Advisory Council was one of the principal participants in the establishment of the first industrial school for 'coloured' boys, its perception of the 'submerged coloured class' of the Western Cape crucially informed its understanding of the role of this institution.⁸⁰

2. The Role of the Coloured Advisory Council

The Coloured Advisory Council in the 1940s performed a dual role in terms of the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries. On the one hand, the Council interacted in discursive ways with the ways in which juvenile delinquency among the 'coloured' population were understood. On the other hand, the Coloured Advisory Council did much of the physical investigative work in directly engaging the Union Government about the dominant social problems within the 'coloured' population at that time.



⁸⁰ The Secretary for Union Education noted in 1946 that the persistent 'pressure' applied by the CAC and other related groupings on the Union Education Department had persuaded the Department to provide a government industrial school for 'coloured' boys. See Pretoria Archives (PA), *SAB UOD*, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Part 1, "Nywerheidskole vir Nie-blankes, 1946-1951", letter dated 30/12/1946 from the Secretary for Union Education to the Secretary of the Department of Public Works

a) *A few general impressions of 'lower class' 'coloureds' presented in the 1940s*

The CAC's understanding of 'coloured' crime in the 1940s represented a significant contribution to the understanding of the causes for delinquent conduct in South Africa. This is particularly interesting given the way in which the Union Government formulated the crime problem at that time. In 1944 a general outcry erupted in Cape Town's 'coloured' community in response to what was regarded as a particularly 'harsh' penalty meted out to a 'coloured' twenty-two-year-old fisherman, Joseph Phillips, who was hung for the rape of a sixteen year-old 'european' girl at Hout Bay. His two youth accomplices were each sentenced to fifteen years hard labour.⁸¹

In appealing for mercy on behalf of the convicted, the Coloured Advisory Council observed that the environment, the home-life, and the personalities of the three accused had led to their maladjustment:

From a deep understanding of the environmental conditions affecting the 'coloured' community in general, the Council begs to submit the following points of view:

1. The *home circumstances* of the boys were quite adverse. In one case, there was evidence of family disintegration, the parents having separated, and the boy was subjected to the demoralising influence of knowing that his mother was cohabiting with another man. The parents, as all others in their plane of life, took no special interest in the education of their children, and coupled with the absence of compulsory education for 'coloured' children, the educational attainments of the boys were very weak indeed. Without the training and inspiration to read books, and deprived of the positive opportunities for taking part in sport, these boys degenerated into sexual neurotics.

2. *Their impoverished environment* provided no outlet for their manly energies, and they developed no healthy occupations through which *their primary impulses* could have undergone a degree of

⁸¹ It was noted at the time that a 'white' farmer in the Transvaal had been sentenced in that same year to three years hard labour for raping a 'native' woman, even though he had previously been convicted of two similar offences. See Cape Archives (CA), *TBK KUS, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9Part 1*, "Coloured Advisory Council - Liason Section: Special problems/Crime: Juvenile delinquency and penal treatment"

sublimation. In the absence of even the barest cultural background, they were forced by circumstances to indulge in the baser vices of life, chief of which meant association with undesirable types of women.

3. Their lot resulted in an affliction, which, it must be admitted, is a scourge amongst their group. *Their ignorant minds* were filled with desires that were fanned by highly suggestible films, and which found expression in a crime that is unparalleled in this country. (my emphasis).⁸²

This and other articles featured in the Cape Times in that year reflected a general anxiety about the increase of crime in the Cape Peninsula. Newspapers regularly pointed to the substantial increase of serious crime in the period 1939 to 1942 (by 63,9%) and asserted that this was partly due to the influx into the Cape Peninsula of 'native' and 'coloured' rural youths as a result of the Second World War.⁸³

A Departmental Committee (chaired by the Minister of Justice, CF Steyn) appointed to inquire into the alleged increase of serious crime in the Cape Peninsula, reported in 1944 that:

- 1) The 'skolly menace' was made up of groups of young 'non-europeans' males between the ages of 15-19 years, whose activities were peculiar to the Cape Peninsula;
- 2) These groups of young males were of the hooligan elements whose methods were cowardly;
- 3) These youths operated principally at night, their victims usually being people under the influence of liquor, or unsuspecting individuals, and their motives were mostly robbery.⁸⁴

This definition of the 'skolly menace' was informed at that time by a particular perception of the 'skolly'.

⁸² CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9 Part 1, undated memo from CAC (11/8)

⁸³ In his presentation to a committee set up by government in 1943 to investigate the 'skolly menace', A Major Goldby highlighted the two articles that appeared in the Cape Times on the 25/1/1944. He argued that the articles emphasised the nature of this 'phenomenon'. See CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9Part 1

⁸⁴ CA, *TBK KUS* Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9 Part 1, 'Memo dated 4/1/1944'. Adhikari has also observed the attention given to this 'skolly menace' by the *Teachers League of South Africa*. He notes that a "sub-committee of the Executive was set up in 1937 to monitor and report on the 'skolly menace'." See Adhikari (1993), p.151

In its specific meaning the word 'skollie' was readily applied to 'won't works', juvenile delinquents, 'loafers' and all anti-social elements of the 'coloured and 'malay' communities⁸⁵.

Also, the perception of the 'skollie' as 'a different breed' was informed by the belief that their presence generally aggravated the severe poverty under which the 'coloured' unemployed and poor lived:

“een van die groot nadele van die skollie eeuwee is dat sy teenwoordigheid die omstandighede van die ware werklose verswaar en die possissie om die werklose te help tien maal swaarder maak (one of the unfortunate consequences of the skollie milieu is that the presence of skollies makes life ten times harder for the unemployed and greatly aggravates their circumstances.)”⁸⁶

In this period a definite link was being made between the influences of the 'coloured' home and the high rate of juvenile delinquency and skolly activity in the 'coloured' community. Attorney Fanny Gross argued at the time that:

Case studies have shown that it is mainly from the broken and neglected homes in congested areas, where the children have to leave school at an early age, suffer from the lack of proper supervision and recreational facilities, have little or no opportunity for learning a trade or obtaining employment, and are forced to fritter away a good deal of their time in idleness, that the majority of 'coloured' juvenile delinquents may be traced. Judging by the sobriety of the better classes amongst them there is every reason to believe that increased wages, better living conditions and improved standards of living would generally reduce the intemperance and general criminal activities of the anti-social 'coloured' home.⁸⁷

The initial responses to the alleged increase of 'coloured' delinquency in the Western Cape therefore focused on the 'unruly' home-life of maladjusted and neglected boys. It was in this period that the 'educative' opportunities provided at reformatories and industrial schools, became a more pronounced aspect of Union Government policy towards 'coloured' children.

⁸⁵ A Union Education Department memo noted in 1954 that the word 'skollie' was roughly an afrikaans term used initially by 'coloured' fishermen. ('Skolly' represented an anglicisation of the term.) See CA, TBK KUS, Vol.2690, Ref:8/6/3: "Welsynsinrigtings vir kinders: Jeugmisdaad", memo dated 11/11/1954 (K/10/1/5).

⁸⁶ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.2690, Ref:8/6/3, Memo dated 8/8/1955

b) Middle-class 'coloured' pressure and the Coloured Advisory Council

A conference that was organised by the National Liberation League⁸⁸ in 1942 to discuss the 'skolly menace' reflected that the increase in 'coloured' juvenile crime in Cape Town could mostly be attributed to the effects of rapid urbanisation, poverty and the lack of adequate social welfare and education facilities.⁸⁹

At a time in which the vast majority of working class 'coloured' people were "more busy trying to keep the wolf from the door"⁹⁰ it was the pressure from middle class 'coloured' groups such as the above that (increasingly) secured welfare measures. The majority of such groups invariably focused on the 'menace' that plagued the 'coloured' community.

The progressive development of any nation or people is retarded and its energy sapped by dire attacks of immorality, drunkenness, hooliganism, gambling and extravagance.⁹¹

It was no surprise then that the Coloured Advisory Council (whose members were derived from the 'coloured' middle class) repeatedly stressed the urgent need for the erection of government industrial schools⁹² for 'coloured' delinquent boys in the Cape Peninsula. In letters to the Secretary for Social Welfare from March 1945 the CAC requested "that two industrial schools for Coloured boys be established in

⁸⁷ Gross (1944), p.44

⁸⁸ The National Liberation League (NLL) was established in December 1935 for young 'coloured' 'radicals', led by Cissie Gool. They were disillusioned with the 'assimilationist' policies of the African Political Organisation (APO) at that time. See Lewis (1987), p.205.

⁸⁹ The NLL call for stricter police action and improved social welfare facilities demonstrated that there were substantive similarities between the social policies of the NLL and the policies of moderate 'coloured' elites such as the CAC with regard to the issue of 'coloured' juvenile crime at that time.

⁹⁰ Virtually no literature exists of the views of 'working class coloureds' in this period. For an understanding of the way in which 'middle-class' 'coloureds' viewed the period, see Villa-Vicencio (1995), p.109

⁹¹ For insight into the rationale behind the 'civilising' mission of the Teachers League of South Africa, see Adhikari (1993), pp.154-157

⁹² While members of the CAC clearly 'constructed' their calls for such an institution on the government industrial school for 'white' boys in George, it is probable that they were also referring to the many trade schools provided for 'white' children when shaping their requests.

Cape Town on the same basis as the industrial school for European boys at George”.⁹³

In addressing the perceived increase of delinquency among ‘coloured’ youth, as well as what they deemed to be the wrongful committal of many ‘coloured’ destitute children to Porter Reformatory, members of the CAC stressed that the growth in the ‘non-European’ prison population could be attributed to two factors.

- 1) It argued that the overwhelming majority of ‘short-timers’ broke the law out of poor socio-economic conditions, and that adequate wage scales and better housing facilities were required.
- 2) It also claimed that previous experience showed that the alarming growth of juvenile delinquency was by no means confined to the uneducated or poorly educated youth, and that many ‘coloured’ youths of fair educational standards became delinquent “through being allowed to languish for *want of a job*.”⁹⁴ (my emphasis)

At that time the CAC was concerned about the urgent need for social aid and institutional measures, as much as it stressed that problems associated with poverty were intrinsically linked to the lack of opportunities available to the ‘coloured’ youth. The Chairperson of the CAC, G Golding, observed in 1947 that the anti-social behaviour of the ‘coloured’ youth “could be directly attributed to the idleness and frustration” of the ‘coloured’ community. Golding asserted that:

Youths of every race have an urge for adventure. It was for the ‘European’, however, to decide whether the ‘coloured’ youth should satisfy their urges in dissolute gangs with the police as their common enemy, as at present, or in disciplined government-controlled environments, ready and eager for ‘respectable’ social service.⁹⁵

It is also significant that from 1944 the Coloured Advisory Council increasingly called for the establishment of welfare facilities for ‘coloured’ children couched in the discourse of the separation of ‘coloured’ from ‘African’ children. In seeking

⁹³ CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9/Part 1, letters dated 1/3/1945, 15/2/1945, 15/3/1945, 18/6/1945, 24/10/1946

⁹⁴ CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9/Part 1, undated memorandum to the Penal Reform Commission (roughly 1945)

⁹⁵ CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.314, Ref:SWL2/9/Part 3, memo dated 18/9/1947 and Cape Times article dated 17/9/1947

commitments from government⁹⁶ for initiatives that would address the woeful conditions under which the ‘coloured’ ‘submerged population’ lived, the CAC repeatedly based its calls on the issue of ‘colour’.

In a letter dated 15 February 1945 from JP Joshua, Secretary for the CAC, to the Secretary for Social Welfare, an appeal was made for an institute of correction for ‘coloured’ female delinquents. “As the only institution of such a nature is the Eshowe Reformatory in Zululand, an institution which was chiefly occupied by ‘coloured’ girls from the Cape Peninsula, the CAC wishes to express that it is most undesirable that ‘coloured’ girls from the Cape Peninsula should be sent to a reformatory in a ‘native’ territory.”⁹⁷

In fact, it was in response to this query that the Secretary for Education affirmed the commitment of the Union Education Department in 1945 to the establishment of a government industrial school for ‘coloured’ boys.⁹⁸ The Secretary for Union Education noted that “the Department is aware of the desirability of providing a separate institution for ‘coloured’ delinquent girls, but the interference of the War with our normal development and the present acute building crisis makes it impossible for the present to create such an institution”.

In any case, the most urgent need for ‘coloureds’ is an industrial school for boys that it is intended to open at the Cape as soon as circumstances permit.⁹⁹

The CAC asserted in the 1940s that the discriminatory lack of state facilities for ‘coloured’ youth lay at the heart of the existence of ‘undesirable types’ among them. The CAC repeatedly pointed to the large number of ‘coloured’ youths in penal institutions, many of whom were simply orphaned, neglected or destitute. At that

⁹⁶ Secretary of the CAC, JP Joshua, asserted in 1945 that ‘coloureds’ had to be segregated from ‘natives’ in government programmes. He asserted that should government not be in favour of passing (segregatory) policy to ensure this, it could at least make a commitment that such a condition would be administratively maintained. See CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9Part 1, letter to the Secretary for Social Welfare dated the 1/3/1945

⁹⁷ The ‘coloured’ population tended to call for ‘separatory measures’ from ‘natives’ when distressed. See CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9Part 1

⁹⁸ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14 /19C/1, “*Nywerheidskole vir nie-blankes 1946-1951*”, letters dated of letter dated 7/8/1946. Also see CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9Part 1, letter dated 25/5/1945

⁹⁹ The Secretary of Education noted in 1945 that the Education Department was also investigating the possibility of an industrial school for ‘coloured’ girls which was considered a more urgent need than a reformatory (though that too was not ruled out at the time). See CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312,

time, a large number of ‘coloured’ juvenile delinquents were also being tried in open court and not in accordance with the Children’s Act.¹⁰⁰

Until 1948 most cases involving ‘coloured’ delinquent, destitute, orphaned and ‘in need of care’ boys were primarily referred to Porter Reformatory, in Cape Town. Other than prison, Porter Reformatory represented the *only* state institution at the time to which ‘problem’ ‘coloured’ children (from those who were deemed to have committed the smallest infringement to the most outrageous deviant act) could be ‘committed’. From 1944 the staff at Porter Reformatory increasingly pressurised the Union Education Department to provide ‘alternative’ initiatives to remedy the problem of overcrowding that the institution was experiencing.

Attention will subsequently focus on Porter’s role in the establishment of a government industrial school for ‘coloured’ boys, and the response of the Union Government to problems encountered at Porter Reformatory.

3. The Porter Reformatory for ‘coloured’ boys

a) A brief background to ‘coloured’ reformatory provision

Porter Reformatory, South Africa’s first reformatory, was established in 1882 in Cape Town¹⁰¹. Porter Reformatory emerged at a particular moment in South Africa’s history. It was established to ‘break down’ the ‘wild and reckless’ habits of juvenile delinquents in the Cape Peninsula and to build up within them values considered appropriate for the respectable working class. These (appropriate) values

Ref:SWL2/9Part 1, letter from the Secretary of Education to the Secretary for Social Welfare dated 25/5/1945.

¹⁰⁰ The Secretary for Union Education noted in 1948 that the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries “fulfils a need that has long been felt.” See Union of South Africa (1949), *Annual Report of the Department of Education, Arts and Science for 1948*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.12)

¹⁰¹ The first reformatory in South Africa was originally situated on the farm Valkenberg, in Observatory. It was moved to the Tokai Estate in 1889 when William Porter bequeathed land for the reformatory. From that time, the Valkenberg farm was used as a mental hospital.

included obedience, honesty, cleanliness and a willingness to work.¹⁰² Linda Chisholm has argued that the transformation of South African social relations occasioned by the mineral discoveries of the last quarter of the nineteenth century had given rise to new classes, new ideologies, and new social institutions. The establishment of reformatories formed a significant part of the latter development.¹⁰³ It was asserted within most international debates that delinquents could be exposed to different, more positive influences if placed within the correct disciplinary context.¹⁰⁴ The reformatory emerged internationally at that time as the ‘humane alternative’ to imprisonment. Within the wider political and global framework, reformatory provision was posited as ways of nursing juveniles through special rehabilitative programmes of work, and some schooling, back to ‘useful citizenship’.¹⁰⁵ The imprisonment of juvenile delinquents was regarded as harshly punitive and out of synch with the reforming impulse of the welfare policy associated with the emerging modern state.

Initially no distinctions were made between ‘white’ and ‘non-european’ at Porter. From the 1890s onwards however the boys at the institution were increasingly separated in terms of sleeping accommodation, eating arrangements and the training they received.¹⁰⁶ This reflected racial segregatory practices that were emerging in the Cape Colony at that time as part of broader social policies in the provision of housing, welfare relief and formal education.¹⁰⁷ The process of classification and surveillance that marked the development of this new form of social regulation

¹⁰² Chisholm, L (1984), *The Pedagogy of Porter Reformatory: the origins of the reformatory in the Cape Colony, 1882-1910*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished African Studies Seminar paper,, p.2).

¹⁰³ Chisholm (1984), p.1

¹⁰⁴ Chisholm (1984), p.5

¹⁰⁵ See Chisholm (1988), *Segregation and Welfare: Children in Prisons and on Probation, 1911-1932*, (Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand: unpublished paper, p.3)

¹⁰⁶ Chisholm asserts that ‘white’ boys were channelled into industrial training, while ‘non-white’ boys were used for manual tasks, such as gardening, milking, tending cows and general farm labour. See Chisholm (1988), p.25

¹⁰⁷ Paterson, A (1992), *Contest and Co-Option: The Struggle for Schooling in the African Independent Churches of the Cape Colony, c1895 – 1920*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished doctoral thesis)

(reformatories)¹⁰⁸ was clearly informed by the particular political and economic form taken by South Africa's industrial revolution from the 1890s (based as it was on a 'native' migrant labour force' and an urbanised 'white' working class).

With the emergence of an industrial school system for 'poor whites' alongside reformatories from 1909 onwards, reformatory provision became progressively differentiated. In this period the welfare needs of 'whites' were increasingly being framed within a racial social policy that sought to rescue the 'white' urban poor through initiatives that emphasised re-education and re-socialisation. Chisholm has noted that:

For the 'non-white' child, the reformatory existed alongside the prison, as a form of control over his movement and labour; for the 'european' (however), the industrial school and reformatory existed alongside the school, for the re-allocation and re-socialisation of the children of the urban unemployed.¹⁰⁹

Differentiated systems of control at reformatories were developed to correspond with this 'wider' policy. For example, in 1924 the 'white' delinquents were moved to an adjoining yet separate institution, Constantia Reformatory, on the Tokai Plantation.¹¹⁰



Differentiation in the reformatory system from the 1920s was not confined to its separate provision. In this period there were also differences in the discourses that informed the administration of the separated institutions. At Constantia Reformatory mental 'backwardness' among working class and poor 'white' boys was deemed to stem from the 'degenerate' environments in which the boys were

¹⁰⁸ Chisholm (1988), p.26

¹⁰⁹ Chisholm (1988), p.26

¹¹⁰ References to the 'two' reformatories in official documents imply two completely separate institutions. That was not always the case. In 1912 the 'white' boys at Porter were transferred to Houtpoort Reformatory near Heidelberg, Gauteng. However, in 1923/4, a 'white' reformatory was established on the Tokai Plantation alongside Porter Reformatory. The administration of the 'two' institutions in this period functioned as a single unit. With one principal in charge of both institutions, the deputy-principal of Tokai usually oversaw the daily functioning of Porter. That would explain seemingly contradictory references to Dr. CM Van Antwerp and Mr. WD Marais as Principal of Porter in the period (pre-1947) under review. From 1943 efforts were made to detach the institutions. This led to the formation of two completely independent institutions round about

socialised. At Porter Reformatory the emerging discourse of ‘mental defect’ was progressively fused with racist assumptions about the mental inferiority of ‘non-whites’. It was argued that their ‘obvious difference’ required treatment of a separate and distinct nature. At the time, distinctions were also made between the different levels of ‘backwardness’ of ‘coloureds’ and ‘africans’. Inspector Louis Van Schalkwyk asserted in 1945 that the ‘differences’ that were deemed to exist between ‘natives’ and ‘coloureds’ also needed to be addressed.

It is reasonable to assume that the mentality and general attitudes of ‘natives’ and so-called Cape ‘coloureds’ show distinct differences, each requiring a different method of approach. If this is so, then the two races should be separated, which at present is not always done.¹¹¹

‘Coloureds’ in particular were regarded as constituting a naturally thieving community, and delinquency was presented as a part of their biological constitution. Chisholm asserts that an important distinction emerged in this period around methods of ‘treatment’ for ‘coloured’ and ‘native’ juveniles. It was suggested at the time that as ‘natives’ were more responsive to methods of mass treatment in large institutions, that they should preferably be detained in institutions which exerted a greater degree of control, like prisons. Given state policy towards ‘coloureds’ at the time, the ‘naturally thieving’ ‘coloured’ juvenile was regarded as ‘treatable’. It was argued that with ‘individualistic training’ ‘coloured’ boys could be re-socialised.¹¹²

It is however particularly significant that during the period 1910-1935 reformatories were not the only or preferred means used to deal with errant members of the ‘coloured’ ‘submerged class’. A diverse system of punishment was applied to ‘coloured’ juveniles, to the extent that the reformatory was only really utilised by the courts as alternatives to imprisonment, fines, whipping, apprenticeship and probation. This lack of state-controlled institutions other than the Porter Reformatory to which ‘coloured’ juveniles appearing before the courts during the

1945 with their ‘own’ administrations. This system of separate institutions for delinquents of various ‘race groups’ prevailed as a state policy into the 1990s.

¹¹¹ Cited in Chisholm (1989), p.176

¹¹² Chisholm (1989), p.177

1920s could be sent, did translate however into an over-reliance on coercive techniques such as imprisonment, apprenticeship and repatriation to the rural areas.¹¹³

Chisholm has noted that for the period 1911 to 1939 the majority of ‘coloured’ juveniles appearing before the courts were more often whipped, fined, discharged with warnings, or given suspended sentences, than ‘committed’ to reformatories.¹¹⁴ Also, when such boys were institutionalised, far more were sent to prison than to the Porter Reformatory. Chisholm noted that by 1929 up to 979 ‘uncontrollable’ ‘coloured’ juveniles had been apprenticed to farmers, because “no provision was made in institutions for them.”¹¹⁵ The lack or inadequate provision of maintenance grants for ‘coloured’ children at that time ensured that ‘coloured’ boys were readily ‘apprenticed’ by probation officers to farmers living either in the country or towns.¹¹⁶

During the 1930s conditions at Porter began to change. The transfer of reformatories from the Department of Prisons to the Union Education Department in 1934 brought with it new approaches towards ‘coloured’ juvenile delinquency. These approaches were fused to the way in which wider society and social concerns were explored in relation to crime, delinquency and social order at that time. From 1936 there was a noticeable increase in the committal of ‘coloured’ juveniles to reformatories, and a corresponding decline in the numbers confined to prison. Whereas until 1939 the

¹¹³ Chisholm (1989), pp.136-7

¹¹⁴ Chisholm asserts that more juveniles, both ‘white’ and ‘non-white’, were sent to prison between 1911-1937 than to reformatories. Comparisons between the number of ‘coloured and native’ juveniles under twenty-one sent to prison in 1933 and those committed to reformatories indicate that 21,109 boys were sent to prison compared to 619 that were sent to reformatories. See Chisholm (1989), p.138

¹¹⁵ Chisholm (1989), p.149

¹¹⁶ Gross noted in 1944 that there were four basic methods that were used to punish the ‘coloured’ juvenile delinquent, namely caning, committing him to a reformatory, sentencing him to a term of imprisonment, or indenturing him to some farmer. Gross asserted in 1944 that “this last form of treatment (indenture) was sound in principle, as it aimed to remove the delinquent from the environment where his anti-social habits were originally acquired. At the same time it provided the boy with an opportunity to develop physically and to find an outlet for his natural buoyancy”. See Gross (1944), p.50

indenture-contract system was favoured as a form of social ‘intervention’, it was generally discouraged after 1939 due to vociferous ‘coloured’ opposition.¹¹⁷ Given Porter’s new ‘supposedly-educative’ role, Commissioners of Child-Care¹¹⁸ in this period preferred sending boys deemed to be ‘maladjusted’ and ‘in need of care’ to the Porter Reformatory for trade training and training in personal and ‘moral’ discipline.

More and more the solution to ‘coloured’ delinquency was said to lie in ‘slum’ clearance and the removal of destitute, neglected, uncontrollable and delinquent children from areas where they were prone to ‘temptation’. Simons has noted that most convictions in this period were based on crimes other than those considered ‘serious’. There were thus many occasions when boys were sentenced to Porter Reformatory for three to five years for “pilfering peanuts, taking fruit from trees, or simply chasing fowls.”¹¹⁹

This steady increase in the number of ‘coloured’ boys being committed to the Porter Reformatory led the Warden of Porter to complain to the Union Education Department in 1942 that:

We cannot take another pupil. Our stoeps and our sheds are full to bursting. Dining rooms are overflowing and numbers at the institution stand at the capacity of 400.¹²⁰

By 1943 the number of ‘pupils’ at Porter had reached a new high of 537.¹²¹ The two reformatory Hostels, Porter House and Orpen House with a capacity of 160 were providing for 463 pupils in 1943. No dining room or kitchen facilities were

¹¹⁷ Chisholm has observed that the ‘coloured’ division of the Child Welfare Association in the period 1937 to 1940 regularly and vocally objected to this system. See Chisholm (1989), p.242. Lewis has also referred to the “considerable pressure exerted by the CAC in this period for the discontinuation of this system”. See Lewis, (1987), p.212

¹¹⁸ The term Commissioners of Child-Care was used to describe magistrates in Children’s Courts. The term was used to indicate that while Children’s Courts were judicial institutions, the social needs children were not treated or referred to in penal ways. See Section B, Chapter 2

¹¹⁹ Simons, H (1931), *Crime and Punishment with reference to the Native population of South Africa*, (Pretoria, University of South Africa: unpublished Masters thesis, p.8)

¹²⁰ Cited in Chisholm (1989), p.354

¹²¹ Chisholm (1989), p.354

provided at the hostels, and four of the classrooms had to be converted into dormitories.¹²²

In that period the problem of overcrowding at Porter Reformatory made a complete mockery of the Union Education Department's policy of 'scientific intervention and reformation'. Many pupils were being released on license after very short spells at the institution, absconding was rife and recidivism increased rapidly. The Union Education Department sought to respond to these problems by establishing four more after-care hostels attached to Porter Reformatory between 1944-1946. Many people, both within and outside Porter,¹²³ believed however that the provision of additional hostels at Porter did not adequately address the 'bigger' problems faced by the Porter Reformatory and the 'coloured' community that it was deemed to 'serve'.

b) The links between the Porter Reformatory and the Ottery School of Industries

The Principal of Porter Reformatory,¹²⁴ C Van Antwerp, noted in correspondence with the Secretary for Education on the 23rd January 1946 that the establishment of the four hostels was to be welcomed. He asserted however that the establishment of the four hostels did not resolve the particularly urgent problem of young indigent 'coloured' boys being housed together with delinquent boys at Porter.

It is felt that the available accommodation provides an opportunity for establishing an Industrial School as a part of the institution for the younger pupils who are now receiving the same treatment and are under the same strict discipline as the older boys. My Board is anxious to learn your views on the question of establishing an Industrial School as an integral part of this (Porter) institution.¹²⁵

¹²² Cited in Chisholm (1989), p.354

¹²³ This general category included those institutional members intent on fulfilling the 'enlightened' notion of 'reformation', as well as non-institutional members associated with Porter ('coloured' associations such as church groups, welfare and health care workers, etc)

¹²⁴ Grobler(1938), p.121. For more information on Porter Reformatory, see Chisholm (1989), chapter 1,5,6, and 12

¹²⁵ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Part 1

Van Antwerp stressed the necessity for a government industrial school based on five factors, namely that:

- a) No government industrial school existed for 'coloured' boys;
- b) Many boys at the Porter Reformatory were *too young* (under 14) to benefit from reformatory institutionalisation;
- c) A large number of pupils were being sent to the Porter Reformatory *from certified institutions*¹²⁶ not by the Juvenile Court as was the norm for pupils sent to the institution, but by the Children's Court;
- e) Too many destitute, neglected and abandoned 'coloured' boys were being sent to Porter Reformatory without having done anything wrong and simply based on their welfare needs;
- f) Due to the pressure exerted by the Coloured Advisory Council, the practice of institutionalising destitute 'coloured' children had been suspended. Commissioners of Child Care were subsequently unsure of how to deal with this 'type' of child when they 'appeared' before them.¹²⁷

In correspondence with the Union Education Department in this period, Principal Van Antwerp repeatedly stressed the many disadvantages in the '*mixing*' of boys at Porter. Given the emergence of "recent enlightened penal-educational policy", he asserted that the younger boys¹²⁸ were being unnecessarily and "wrongly 'exposed' to the delinquency of the older committed boys". He likewise objected to the transferral to the Porter Reformatory of "far too many boys from state orphanages like Lawrencia State Hostel" for trade training.¹²⁹ Van Antwerp believed that these boys were being unnecessarily 'placed' in penal circumstances, and had only been transferred to Porter because of the lack of government industrial schools and other social institutions for 'coloured' children. (Van Antwerp asserted that there were thirty boys at Porter in 1944 that required care in alternative institutions. In 1945 there were forty-five).

¹²⁶ Certified institutions were essentially state children's homes. The Lawrencia State Institution in Kraaifontein, Cape Town was such an institution and catered for 'coloured' boys between the ages 7-14

¹²⁷ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Part 1, letter dated 25 February 1946 from Van Antwerp to Secretary of Education.

¹²⁸ It was noted that 60 non-delinquent boys at the institution were under-fourteen years old. An emphasis on trade training was considered appropriate for them.

¹²⁹ The Lawrencia State Institution cared for young 'coloured' boys under the age of fourteen. As no trade facilities existed at the institution, 'coloured' boys were usually transferred to Porter Reformatory for such training upon turning fourteen years old.

The increase in the committal to the Porter Reformatory of destitute and neglected children in the period 1939-1945 was also the cause of much consternation.¹³⁰ The Juvenile Court had committed as many as 120 destitute children to Porter Reformatory in 1945.¹³¹ Van Antwerp stressed that the tendency to ‘commit’ destitute ‘coloured’ children to Porter was “an unhealthy practice” and observed that the issue had been taken up and roundly condemned by the Coloured Advisory Council. Van Antwerp noted that:

“Kommisaris van Kindersorg weet nou nie wat om met hierdie tipe kind te doen nie en die behoefte aan ‘n nywerheidskool tree nou sterker op die voorgrond as vroeer die geval was (*Commissioners of Child Care do not presently know what to do with this type of child. The need for an industrial school has become more urgent than before.*)”¹³²

In January 1946 the Union Education Department declared that it was not in favour of the establishment of a government industrial school as part of Porter Reformatory, but that it would explore other avenues to address the ‘needs’ of the ‘coloured’ community.

Daar is wel besware teen hulle voorstel, maar nie wat opweeg teen die behoefte wat daar is om die Kleurling-bevolking te help nie. (*While there are certainly objections to your suggestion, they are not opposed to helping the ‘coloured’ population.*)¹³³

While it was conceded in 1945 that young ‘coloured offenders’ needed to be removed from Porter Reformatory, it was asserted that the subsequent provision of

¹³⁰ Van Antwerp noted in 1946 that: “daar is ‘n sterk neiging veral in die laaste jare om *sorgbehoewende kinders* na Porter oor te plaas. Hierdie kinders het ‘n heel ander voorsiening nodig wat nie in ‘n verbeteringskool kan verskaf word nie” (*there is a tendency to transfer neglected and indigent boys to Porter Reformatory, especially in the last few years. These children have entirely different needs that are not available in a reformatory*). Van Antwerp noted that in 1939 there were 9 such boys, in 1941-12, in 1943- 25, in 1944- 38, and in 1945- 43.

The age groups at Porter in 1946 were as follows (10 to 22 years old):

10 years -- 2	13 years -- 24	16 years-- 53	19 years -- 18	22 years-- 11
11 “ --4	14 “ -- 48	17 “ --78	20 “ -- 25	
12 “ --15	15 “ --74	18 “ --45	21 “ -- 20	

See PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Part 1, letter dated 11/6/1946

¹³¹ See later section on the history of industrial schools in South Africa, where it is explained how children ‘in trouble’ were committed to reformatories via the Juvenile Court, and to industrial schools, orphanages, hostels and children’s homes via the Children’s Court

¹³² PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Part 1, letter dated 25 February 1946 from Van Antwerp to Secretary of Education.

‘alternative institutions’ had to be able “to draw on the scientific knowledge and experience of psychologists, educational specialists and other relevant experts.”¹³⁴

The establishment of a government industrial school provided such opportunities. This emphasis on the increased participation of ‘scientific experts’ in dealing with the needs of ‘coloured’ indigent children was informed by the discourse at that time that firmly linked poverty to issues of delinquency. In this regard, Van Antwerp had set about establishing after-care hostels during the early 1940s to act as a ‘bridge between the reformatory and the coloured home’.¹³⁵ The calls for the establishment of industrial schools from 1946 were thus also based on the need to ‘rescue’ the pre-delinquent juvenile from the ‘coloured’ home. The Joint-Principal of the Porter Reformatory and Tokai Reformatory asserted in 1941 that:

The significance of the failures of our children when they return to their own community life, is a very interesting pointer to the root of the trouble. As long as drunkenness, stabbing, immorality, dagga selling and purse robbing are considered normal life situations for a large section of the ‘coloured’ population (where they themselves protect these elements), large sections of the European population will continue to close an eye to these evils. Reformatories are useless educational experiments that are bound to lead nowhere unless the family situation in ‘coloured’ communities are addressed. Reformatories might as well be closed and military training camps put in their place since our education is, in any case, lost in the filth

¹³³ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Part 1, letter dated 29 January 1946

¹³⁴ Chisholm (1989), pp.181-2

¹³⁵ In an undated article (roughly 1945), principal Van Antwerp noted that:

die oprigting van hierdie koshuise ‘n noodsaaklike ontwikkeling van die Porter verbeteringskool is, aangesien daar gevind is dat 80% kleurlinge wat uit die verbeteringskool ontslaan word en na ‘n slegte samelewing terugkeer, binne ses maande weer in misdaad verval. Wanneer hulle na ‘n paar jaar klaar opgevoed is, ontstaan die probleem van heraanpassing by die normale en byna ongebonde lewe. Die kind is nou opgevoed, maar moet terugkeer juis na daardie huis wat vir sy misstappe verantwoordelik was. Koshuise vir kleurlinge is reeds opgerig om ‘n brug te vorm tussen die Porter-verbeteringskool en die normale lewe (*The establishment of these after-care hostels is a necessary development for the Porter Reformatory, considering the fact that 80% of ‘coloured’ boys released from the institution were found to return to unhealthy home environments and within six months returned to criminal ways. Once they’ve been rehabilitated after a few years, there is always the problem of readjustment to the normal outside world. The boy has now been retrained, but he must then return to the same environment which had been responsible for his committal in the first place. These after-care hostels were established to form a bridge between Porter Reformatory and what was considered to be ‘normal’ outside the institution*)

See CA, TBK KUS, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9Part 1

and degradation of present community life of a large section of these people.¹³⁶

WD Marais¹³⁷ observed in 1942 that many ‘coloured’ juveniles were institutionalised because of their ‘defective parents’.

Boys found themselves at the reformatory not so much as a direct result of the social environment of the family but more often due to the faulty attitudes of parents in the matter of relationships and adjustments in the upbringing of the child. It is therefore very necessary that we correct these attitudes before the child is returned to the same well meaning but misguided relationships.¹³⁸

Marais asserted that as religious, national, legal, traditional and social pressures became more complex in society, greater conflicts emerged that encouraged maladjustment and delinquency. Marais believed that the ‘coloured’ community was at that time experiencing a cultural conflict, where uncertainty about the nature of ‘their culture’ led to disharmony within the ‘coloured’ community. Intra-community conflict over issues like morals, ideals, ideas concerning society, and approaches to honesty, honour, and law and order were seen to result in a large proportion of the ‘submerged coloureds’ living at odds with the ‘established’ order.¹³⁹

Government industrial schools were thus cast as the means whereby thousands of potential delinquents could be ‘saved’ from both careers in crime and moral degradation at home. Institutionalisation in government industrial schools was cast

¹³⁶ Marais, WD (1942), “Juvenile Delinquency”, in *Medico-Legal Monographs no.2, 1942, p.63*, (Cape Town)

¹³⁷ WD Marais was born in 1895 and received his schooling at Tulbagh. While completing a teacher’s diploma at Stellenbosch University, he was offered a teaching post at the Heidelberg Industrial School in 1917, at the very time that the responsibility for industrial schools were transferred to the Union Education Department. After five years he transferred to the King Williamstown Industrial School where he remained for nine years. In 1934 he was invited by JH Hofmeyr to become Principal of the Tokai Reformatories (Porter and Tokai). He retired from Tokai Reformatory after twenty years in 1955, at which time he was granted a Honorary Doctorate in Psychology from the University of Stellenbosch. See Chisholm (1989), p.316

¹³⁸ Marais (1942), p.59

¹³⁹ Marais (1942), p.35

as a means whereby the state would provide sanctuary for the ‘misguided’ ‘coloured’ youth from the ravages of ‘coloured’ home life.

c) *Suggestions around the location of a ‘coloured’ School of Industries*

When discussions first emerged as to the site of the envisaged government industrial school, Education Department officials suggested that the Porter hostel, Kromme Rhee in Koelenhof, Stellenbosch, be transformed into a reformatory for ‘white’ boys. The boys at Constantia Reformatory were to be transferred there. The ‘coloured’ government industrial school could then be established on the vacated premises adjoining Porter.

By 1946, proposals roughly mapped three possible paths for the envisaged government industrial school, namely:

- a) Transferring the ‘white’ boys from Constantia Reformatory (previously attached to Porter) and then using those premises as a government industrial school for ‘coloured’ boys;
- b) Converting two of Porter’s after-care hostels into a government industrial school to accommodate the younger destitute boys;
- c) Using an altogether separate location for the establishment of the government industrial school.¹⁴⁰

Principal Van Antwerp had asserted at the time that given the reduced numbers at Porter (down to 360 because of the provision of the four additional hostels), two of the new hostels at Porter could be used for *a different type of child*.

Die stigting van ‘n nywerheidskool vir 160 leerlinge bied ‘n uitstekende geleentheid vir die departement om onmiddelik sy planne vir die tipe uitbreiding voort te sit. Dit sal nog ‘n geruime tyd neem voordat Constantia Verbeteringskool verskuiwe kan word sodat die geboue vir ‘n nywerheidskool beskikbaar is. Die koshuise kon maklik voor 1/7/1946 verander word in ‘n nywerheidskool (*The establishment here of a government industrial school for 160 boys would present the Union Education Department with a wonderful opportunity to pursue its plans for this kind of institutional expansion. It will still be a while before the Tokai Reformatory can be moved to Kromme Rhee and the buildings then*

¹⁴⁰ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9/Part 1, letters dated 1946 between Van Antwerp, Marais and the Union Education Department

*converted for use as a government industrial school. The two hostels can however easily be transformed into such an institution before 1/7/1946.)*¹⁴¹

While the Union Education Department regarded the transfer of Constantia Reformatory to Stellenbosch as the ‘most desirable option’, it conceded that it would still be a while before Kromme Rhee could be completely renovated to accommodate the ‘white’ boys of Tokai Reformatory. The Union Education Department was adamant that converting two of Porter’s hostels was not the answer as the hostels would probably also ‘suffer’ from overcrowding within two years. The Secretary of Education asserted in early 1946 that:

As die beskikbare ruimte gebruik word as ‘n nywerheidskool sal magistrate volgens die Kinderwet sorgbehoewende kinders direk kon toewys na hierdie skool. As nou in aanmerking geneem word dat nagenoeg 80% of meer van kleurlingkinders sorgbehoewend is, (sal die twee Porter koshuise) binne ‘n paar maand deur meer of wat dieselfde ernstige probleme as die geval nou is. Oor twee of drie jaar wanneer die blankes verplaas is van Constantia en hierdie inrigting as ‘n nywerheidskool vir kleurlinge opgerig is, sal die jonger kinders van die hostels onder Volkswelsyn hierheen en nie na Porter nie oorgeplaas word en dan verdwyn dr.Van Antwerp se hele probleem (*If the available accommodation is used as an industrial school, Children’s Court magistrates will commit boys directly to this institution. If we acknowledge that roughly 80% of ‘coloured’ boys are ‘in need of care’/indigent, within a few months the two hostels will experience much the same problem that Porter is experiencing now. In two to three years when the Whites are transferred to Stellenbosch and that institution is converted into a government industrial school, the young ‘coloured’ boys in the hostels will be transferred to the government industrial school and not to Porter. Van Antwerp’s problem then disappears.*)¹⁴²

The Union Education Department was confronted with ‘immediate pressure’ however to provide social institutions for ‘coloured’ boys. Thus, it informed Van Antwerp in late 1946 that it was looking to secure a military camp (noting the lack of other large venues) for the establishment of a government industrial school. The proposed institution was to be completely separate from Porter.¹⁴³ It was argued that

¹⁴¹ CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9Part 1, letter dated 25/2/1946 from Van Antwerp to Union Education Department

¹⁴² CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9/Part 1, letter dated 2/2/1946 from Secretary of Education

¹⁴³ CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.312, Ref:SWL2/9Part 1, letter dated 30/4/1946 from Union Education Department to Van Antwerp

the increase in 'coloured' boys requiring state care made the provision of a large separate institution a necessity.

Ek is oortuig daarvan dat die nywerheidskool binne 'n kort tydperk vanaf sy stigting sal ontwikkel in 'n veel groter inrigting as die verbeteringskool (*I am convinced that the envisaged government industrial school will shortly develop into a much bigger institution than the Porter Reformatory.*)¹⁴⁴

The factors that inhibited the Union Education Department from securing a suitable site in this period were the scarcity of appropriate venues for such an initiative and the appalling state of the available sites.

The Ack-Ack military camp at Ottery was identified at an early stage as a possible 'venue'. Given the urgency for the provision of such an institution, the conversion of the Ottery camp was strongly encouraged by the Porter staff. Van Antwerp in particular stressed that the Ottery camp could easily provide for 400 boys.¹⁴⁵ He warned though that:

The camp is completely surrounded by shebeens, and day and night robberies in that area are frequent occurrences. If the camp is to be converted into a (government) industrial school for 'coloured' boys, the surrounding fence would need to be reinforced so that pupils can come into contact as little as possible with the people of that vicinity. The police can be asked to clear the area of shebeens as much as possible.¹⁴⁶

In a letter from the Secretary of Education to the Secretary for Public Works dated 30/12/1946, the use of the Ottery camp was contested on the grounds that the grounds were not suitable for the 'habitation of civilians'. The Union Education Department conceded this in a memo to Van Antwerp in 1946.

As a result of pressure exercised by the CAC on this department during the last few years, various camps in the Cape Peninsula and farther afield have been visited by inspectors to determine whether the camps would answer our purposes. The camps at Ottery and Saldanha have been *found to be highly*

¹⁴⁴ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Part 1, letter dated 2/2/1946 from Secretary of Education to Principal Van Antwerp

¹⁴⁵ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1/Vol.1, "Vocational training for ex-volunteers, Cape Technical College and Ottery for Coloured ex-Volunteers", letter dated 4/3/1946 from Van Antwerp to the Secretary of Education

¹⁴⁶ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1/ Vol.1, letter dated 4/3/1946 from Van Antwerp to the Secretary of Education (ref:A17)

unsuitable, and at George and Westlake conditions were found to be favourable.¹⁴⁷

The eventual establishment of a government industrial school at Ottery in 1948 was therefore by no means *a fait accompli*. When it was discovered that the Ottery camp was covered in water during the winter months, coupled to its ‘unfavourable’ ‘shebeen-infested’ surroundings, other venues were explored. The George (‘Lugskoolkamp’) Flying School was the first site that was explored for a ‘coloured’ government industrial school. The Union Education Department initially resolved that the camp would ‘house’ the envisaged ‘correctional’ institution.¹⁴⁸ Due to it being earmarked for an ‘european’ housing scheme however, the Secretary of Defence informed the Union Education Department in 1947 that the camp was not available. It was noted that, even if it had been available, the George Town Council vociferously opposed the ‘housing’ of ‘lower-class non-europeans’ in and around George¹⁴⁹.

The Westlake military camp in Cape Town also represented a more suitable venue (than Ottery). An Inspector Grobbelaar of the Union Education Department observed in 1947 that the camp was big enough to provide for a few thousand boys. In light of the efforts to convert the Westlake Camp into a home for ‘white’ war orphans (or ‘white’ immigrants), or as a housing scheme for ‘white’ ex-soldiers, attempts to secure the camp for a government industrial school for ‘coloured’ boys were abandoned.

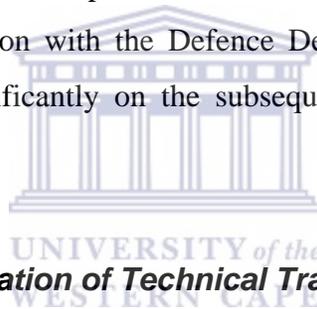
Furthermore, it was asserted that given the particular social and ‘correctional’ needs of ‘coloured’ boys in Cape Town, the required institution needed to be located fairly close to the ‘coloured’ community. The subsequent decision to convert the Ack-Ack military camp at Ottery into a government industrial school (notwithstanding its suggested ‘unsuitability’) in January 1947 was therefore informed by a complex mix

¹⁴⁷ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Vol.1, letter dated 20/11/1946

¹⁴⁸ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Vol.1, letter dated 23/12/1946

of ‘practical dilemmas’. This included the dearth of other ‘available’ sites, and the acknowledgement of the poverty-stricken circumstances of much of the ‘coloured’ families of institutionalised boys. It was noted that if the institution was not located in Cape Town, poor families would simply not be able to afford to visit their children. “This would undermine the very nature of institutional care for these Coloured boys”¹⁵⁰.

It was envisaged that the institution at Ottery would ‘open its doors’ in August 1947 and provide for 500 ‘coloured’ boys. It is significant however that in the period 1946 to October 1948, the camp was used by the Central Organisation of Technical Training (COTT) to provide trade training to ex-volunteer ‘coloured’ soldiers upon their return to Cape Town (after the Second World War). At that time, the Union Education Department was responsible for the administration of the COTT programme, in collaboration with the Defence Department. It is argued that this experience impacted significantly on the subsequent establishment of the Ottery School of Industries.



4. The Central Organisation of Technical Training (COTT)¹⁵¹

In the period after the Second World War, the Ack-Ack military camp at Ottery was utilised to train ex-volunteer Cape Corps soldiers for a trade. It was noted in an Ottery school pamphlet of 1985 that:

Aan die einde van die Tweede Wereldoorlog is die lugafweerbattery te Ottery gebruik vir opleiding deur die Sentrale Organisasie van Tegniese Onderrig (S.O.T.O.) vir oud-soldate. Onderhandelinge is met Verdediging aangeknop insake die oorneme van die kamp (*vir ‘n nywerheidskool*) en planne is deur Inspekteur P.Grobbelaar opgestel waarvolgens die omskepping moes plaasvind (*The Flying School at Ottery was initially used by the Central Organisation for Technical Training to train ex-soldiers in a trade after 1945. Negotiations were entered into with the Defence Force*

¹⁴⁹ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Vol.1, letter dated 23/1/1947 from the Secretary of Defence to the Secretary of Education

¹⁵⁰ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Vol.1, letter dated 20/2/1947 from the Secretary of Education to the Secretary of Defence

¹⁵¹ It is referred to in Afrikaans as S.O.T.O. (Sentrale Organisasie van Tegniese Onderrig)

*about the transformation of the camp for a government industrial school. Inspector Grobbelaar provided the plans for the transformation of the camp).*¹⁵²

The COTT training programme was the manifestation of a desire by the United Party government to equip ‘returning’ ‘coloured’ soldiers with the means to hold onto the ‘enhanced’ position that they had ‘attained’ during the war. While it is acknowledged that the basis of the Central Organisation of Technical Training (COTT) programme cannot be ‘easily’ and simplistically linked to the subsequent establishment of the Ottery School of Industries *on the same site*, particular ideological assumptions underlay both initiatives. Also, the COTT programme at Ottery left behind a ‘physical legacy’ that impacted substantially on the subsequent school of industries.

a) Ideological Assumptions

The Director of Demobilisation, Mr Gordon-Taylor, noted in 1945 that a trade training centre for Cape ‘coloured’ ex-volunteers was to be established at the Ottery military camp. As the programme was being provided for ‘civilians’ and was of an ‘educative’ nature, the trade training centre was envisaged as a collaborative effort between the Department of Defence and the Union Education Department. It was asserted at the time that the provision of trade training would ensure that ex-soldiers would find employment upon returning to Cape Town.

In South Africa in the period after the Second World War the emphasis on providing trade training was not limited to ‘coloured’ boys and returning soldiers. It was an intrinsic aspect of the ‘re-socialisation’ programmes that were provided for all returning soldiers at that time. In the case of ‘coloured’ soldiers the envisaged trade training was conceptualised in relation to the employment context of Cape Town and the type of jobs ‘coloured’ men could secure at that time. Based on the above factors, it was asserted that the trade training that was to be provided at the COTT

¹⁵² All Ottery school pamphlets seem to use ‘this template’ in their annual publications. The particular School Pamphlet consulted was compiled in 1985.

programme needed to ensure that the ‘coloured’ adults became ‘useful citizens’ rather than trained artisans. Gordon-Taylor noted in 1945 that

- 1) There was considerable unemployment among the ‘coloured’ people at the Cape, and ‘coloured’ ex-volunteers that had been placed in temporary employment on discharge were losing their jobs due to the closure of many airfields and the return of ‘white’ soldiers from the War;
- 2) The ‘coloured’ soldier had learned many things during the War. “In many ways he became skilled or semi-skilled and in many of them an ambition was awakened to get on in life and to reach a higher standard of living. Few of those that were previously farm labourers will go back to the relatively miserable conditions under which they lived before, and they can’t be forced back”;
- 3) “If the ‘coloured’ people *are to become good citizens* and the *criminal class* among them *are to be whittled down*, they must be given the *hope of a better future*, and something approaching equality of opportunity with the ‘European’ in the skilled trades. If they cannot be provided the same type of training as ‘whites’, the programmes can at least ensure that they find ‘useful employment’ in the Cape Peninsula”(my emphases).¹⁵³

Gordon Taylor stressed that:

It must be remembered that the War introduced the Coloured soldier to a higher standard of living, and it would be cruel and unwise to thrust them back into the submerged class from which military service temporarily rescued them. In asking the ‘coloured’ man to make the same sacrifices as the European, we committed ourselves to a revolution in his way of living. For industries in South Africa to be placed on a sound basis, our non-European population must be empowered both to contribute their labour and to purchase the products of our industries. Their purchasing power needed thus to be raised and the COTT camp must be seen as the first step in great nation-wide reform.¹⁵⁴

It is clearly significant that in a period when government industrial schools were being discussed as a means to ‘rescue’ delinquent ‘coloured’ youths, other (trade training) programmes were likewise being postulated for non-delinquent ‘coloured’ males. Having been ‘saved’ via extended stints of military service (and thereby ‘absorbing’ lessons of discipline and ‘self control’), these ex-volunteer ‘coloured’ soldiers were regarded as ideal candidates for short-term technical instruction. At

¹⁵³ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1/Vol.1, letter dated 30/11/1945 from A.Gordon Taylor, Honorary Area Liason Officer in Cape Peninsula for the Office of the Director-General of Demobilisation, to the Union Education Department. Also see Wilcocks Commission (1938), p.196

¹⁵⁴ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1/Vol.1, letter dated 30/11/1945

the time, technical education for ‘coloureds’ was deemed especially necessary to the overall reconstruction of the ‘lifestyle’ of the typical ‘coloured’ family.

b) ‘Working’ assumptions

With regard to the establishment of a COTT programme at the Ottery Camp, the Union Education Department subsequently secured the services of the Cape Technical College to administer the programme at Ottery on behalf of the Department. It was argued that the College was best equipped to determine the most ‘pertinent’ occupations for the returning ‘coloured’ soldiers, bearing in mind its experience in providing such training at a separate premises in Cape Town for paying ‘coloured’ students.¹⁵⁵

The Cape Technical College earmarked eight trades in which it believed ‘coloured’ men would most likely find employment. These trades included carpentry, tailoring, shoemaking, cabinet-making, gardening, motor vehicle driving and instruction in elementary running repairs, coopering, and catering.¹⁵⁶

<u>Occupations:</u>	<u>New arrivals per month</u>	<u>maximum in training</u>	<u>duration of courses</u>
bricklayers	20-40 per month	80-160	16 weeks
carpenters	20-40 per month	100-120	20 weeks
Plasterers	10 per month	40	16 weeks
Painters	10 per month	40	16 weeks
Plumbers	10 per month	50	20 weeks
<i>Two further trades were later added:</i>			
Blacksmiths	10 per month	40	16 weeks
Pedal cycle mechanics	10 per month	40	16 weeks

¹⁵⁵ The Cape Technical College resolved in 1945 to represent the Union Education Department at the Ottery site from 2/1/1946. See PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1/Vol.1, letter dated 18/12/1945 from Inspector Op’t Hof to the Secretary of Labour

These trades roughly represented those occupations earmarked to be the domain of the 'coloured' working class for much of the twentieth century. The focus on the manual trades was bound up in notions of 'work discipline', 'work appreciation' and 'social rehabilitation'.

As the COTT programme was envisaged to train up to 1000 Cape Corps ex-volunteers, between the ages of 18-26 with a set level of schooling, the whole of the Ottery camp was made available to the COTT¹⁵⁷. It was noted though that the programme was only expected to exist for two years. Once the returning soldiers were trained, the camp would revert back to the Defence Department.

The Central Organisation for Technical Training Centre No.14 was officially opened on the 28/3/1946, but trade training was only initiated by the 2/5/1946 (for 101 ex-volunteers). The slowness in getting the programme running was attributed at the time to the lack of available tools and workbenches at the Centre. This led to a number of amendments to the original strategy. It was subsequently decided to offer only the carpentry, bricklaying, plastering, and painting trades in six-month courses.

This uncertainty about what courses to offer 'coloured' males and the extent of the funds to be provided for their training reflected the ambiguous stance of the Union Education Department to the provision of technical education for 'coloureds'¹⁵⁸ in that period. In this regard, the Cape Technical College was instructed in 1946 by the Training Management Committee of the National COTT-body to consult with the Porter Reformatory about the ways in which the institution addressed the training needs of 'coloured' boys there. At that time Porter Reformatory was the only other institution with experience in providing trade training for 'coloured' males.

¹⁵⁶ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1, letter dated 24/12/1945

¹⁵⁷ Initially, the camp was to be 'shared' between the Junior Cape Corps and the Central Organisation of Technical Training (COTT). The Junior Cape Corps was administered by the Department of Defence and the COTT programme was administered by the Union Education Department. The whole camp was allocated to the Union Education Department when the COTT programme at the Ottery site proposed to provide for up to 1000 'students'.

¹⁵⁸ Wilcocks Commission (1938), p.197

Information and advice was sought from the institution around matters like workshop lay-out, what tools and equipment were needed, and which raw materials were best suited for such an initiative.¹⁵⁹ In this way, the welfare and educational/training notions associated with a ‘correctional’ context were carried over into the realm of humanitarian philanthropic reform. While the disciplinary goals of the Porter Reformatory at that time significantly informed the type of trade training provided at the institution, it was argued that the provided trade training was also premised on the type of work that ‘coloured’ boys and men could secure outside the institution.

A relationship of close co-operation was subsequently forged between the COTT and Porter Reformatory, with the result that the programme at Ottery regularly called upon the expertise and use of Porter’s trade instructors¹⁶⁰. This ‘association’ between Porter Reformatory and the Ottery camp continued after 1948.¹⁶¹

The Cape Technical College ended its association with the training camp on 31/1/1948. The termination of their association with the COTT programme effectively closed down the COTT Centre No.14. The Centre remained operational however until the 7/6/1948. In that six-month period it was used to test the IQ and trade proficiency of ‘coloured’ soldiers.¹⁶² The Central Organisation of Technical Training Centre No.14 officially ‘closed its doors’ in June 1948.

c) The ‘physical legacy’

¹⁵⁹ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1, letter dated 9/1/1946 from the COTT National-body to the Cape Technical College in Cape Town

¹⁶⁰ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1, letter dated 14/6/1946

¹⁶¹ From 1946 various groups involved in the social, political and economic welfare of the ‘coloured’ population frequently visited the Ottery camp to witness the type of training provided there. This involvement was later used to inform subsequent policy proposals. For example, in 1946 the CAC and other interested ‘coloured’ parties visited the camp to “familiarise themselves with the facilities that was being provided at the camp for the training of ‘coloured’ ex-volunteers with an eye to setting up trade institutions for the Coloured youth”. PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1/Vol.1, letter dated 14/6/ 1946 from the Secretary for Social Welfare to the Secretary of Education.

¹⁶² PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4/1/1/Vol.2, letters dated 14/7/1948, 27/11/1947, 7/5/1948

The main legacy left behind by the COTT programme at Ottery in 1948 was the way in which the camp was divided into a 'white' section and a 'coloured' section. When the camp was allocated to the Union Education Department in 1946 for the COTT programme, two separate access roads were provided to the barrack and messing facilities of the 'european' staff and the 'coloured' ex-volunteers.¹⁶³ This provided an infrastructure for the separate provision of facilities for the 'white' and 'coloured' populations of the Ottery School of Industries after 1948.

Another feature of the camp that impacted substantially on the subsequent programmes of the school of industries was its locality. The provision of trade training for 'coloured' adults (and later boys) meant that the institution needed to be close to the homes, as well as the possible places of employment, of the prospective recipients. This 'experience' of providing trade facilities for 'coloured' males at the Ottery camp was taken up by Union Government officials as a particular approach to addressing the welfare and employment needs of the 'coloured' community. It was linked to the great interest that was shown by both the 'coloured' middle-class and sections of the working class in the activities provided at the Ottery camp, which was seen to indicate "their willingness to get involved in resolving some of their own social problems". With regard to the subsequent establishment of a school of industries at the Ottery camp, it was argued that by locating the institution close to the 'coloured' areas, the further participation of the 'coloured' community in providing social relief could be encouraged. This approach to the provision of institutional care for 'coloured' boys contradicted one of the pillars of institutional care at that time, namely that for their "effective re-socialisation"¹⁶⁴ institutional 'inmates' had to be removed from their "undesirable environments".

At that time the Ottery camp was located between the 'white' working class suburb of Ottery and the 'coloured' areas of Parkwood, Grassy Park and Cook se Bos. This

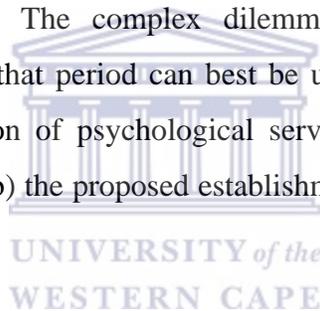
¹⁶³ The two access roads for different 'races' remained a feature of Ottery into the 1980s, by which time the entire staff at Ottery was essentially 'coloured'. The notion of 'separation' was a theme that was entrenched within the institutional logic of the institution.

¹⁶⁴ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E14/19C/1, letter dated 3/8/1948

produced particular dilemmas for the school of industries from 1948. The first Principal of the Ottery School of Industries, FA Bester, noted in 1948 that “*the location of the camp is dangerous and unfavourable* (die ligging van die kamp is baie onaangenaam en gevaarlik)”, and that the area of Parkwood was a ‘coloured’ suburb that had many shebeens. Bester asserted in 1954 that his staff were confronted on a daily basis with discipline problems that could be directly linked to the accessibility of Parkwood, “where boys could simply ‘cross the field’ to Parkwood to buy dagga and liquor”.¹⁶⁵

5. Other Minor ‘constituencies’

There was much confusion during the 1940s about the type and extent of the provision of professional and scientific services that was to be made available to the ‘non-white’ communities. The complex dilemmas that confronted the Union Education Department in that period can best be understood from correspondence related to (a) the provision of psychological services for ‘coloured’ boys at the school of industries, and (b) the proposed establishment of a school of industries for ‘african’ boys.



a) The provision of psychological services at ‘correctional’ institutions

In the period after 1946 psychological and ‘scientific’ knowledge was increasingly regarded as an intrinsic aspect of the provision of schools of industries. The increased provision of psychological services in state ‘correctional’ institutions after 1946 also reflected the development at that time of a close relationship between the Union Education Department and professional psychologists. In a letter from the Secretary of the Union Education Department to the Secretary of the Treasury in 1946, it was noted that:

Met die verloop van tyd het dit vir die Departement duidelik geword dat sielkundige dienste ‘n noodsaaklike deel van die nywerheid-en-verbeteringskole se program moet vorm as die optimum mate van sukses behaal moet word met die heraanpassing van die leerlinge. Die hoofdoel van

¹⁶⁵ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.124, Ref:79/2/3/2, ‘Principal Report of 1954’, p.5

hierdie dienste is in die eerste plek om *wetenskaplik* vas te stel wat die leerling se sielkundige probleme is wat aanleiding gegee het tot sy *wanaanpassing in die samelewing*, en tweedens om hom dan met deskundige leiding te help om sy *gedragsprobleme* op te los terwyl hy vir ‘n *nering* opgelei word. (*It has become increasingly clear to the department that the provision of psychological services at school of industries and reformatories must form an important part of their programmes, if the rehabilitation of the pupils is to be successful. The main purpose of these services is firstly to ascertain scientifically the psychological problems of the pupil that gave rise to his maladjustment, and secondly to then use scientific means to resolve his behavioural problems, while at the same time providing him with training for employment in an artisanal trade*).¹⁶⁶

Alongside developments that centred on the psychology and personality of the child that was committed to state institutions, it was felt that the staffs at schools of industries and reformatories generally did not possess the necessary ‘expert’ knowledge to address the ‘needs’ of the children. ‘Outside’ tertiary-based assistance was therefore pursued. The Secretary of Education observed in late 1946 that

Dit kan egter nie van gewone onderwysers en instruktors verwag word om gespesialiseerde werk van hierdie aard, waarvoor hulle nie opgelei is nie, doeltreffend te onderneem nie. (*It cannot be expected from normal teachers and instructors to provide effective specialist work of this nature, especially when they have not been trained to do so*).¹⁶⁷

The Union Education Department thus approached particular universities to provide intelligence testing expertise for their institutions. It was noted that

Kliniese dienste kan langs een van twee weë verskaf word, naamlik deur spesiaal opgeleide personeel of in die geval van inrigtings wat gerieflik naby universiteite gelee is, deur negraadse studente wat in sielkunde spesialiseer aan sodanige universiteite en onder die toesig van dosente die werk doen. (*Universities can provide clinical services in two ways. It can either provide specially trained personnel to do the tests, or in the case of universities that are closely situated to ‘correctional’ facilities, by post-graduate students who are specialising in psychology and who can then work under the supervision of their superiors*).¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/26, “Sielkundige dienste, 1946-1963”, letter dated 8/10/1946

¹⁶⁷ PA, SAB UOD, Vol.2213, Ref:E327 Part 1, “Psychological and clinical services at industrial schools and reformatories 1946-1961”, letters dated May 1946 and Oct 1946

¹⁶⁸ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/26, “Sielkundige dienste, 1946-1963”, letter dated 8/10/1946. Also see PA, SAB UOD, Vol.2213, Ref:E327 Part 1, “Psychological and clinical services at industrial schools and reformatories 1946-1961”, letters dated May 1946 and Oct 1946.

The Union Education Department subsequently negotiated with the University of Stellenbosch to provide psychological service training for university students at ‘correctional’ institutions in the Western Cape.

- 1) It was agreed that one or two post-graduates (with a D.Phil or M.Phil) would work for three months of the year at state ‘correctional’ institutions in the Western Cape;
- 2) They were to work free of charge, with free board and lodging at the relevant institutions, and free train fare (convertable to petrol allowances) to and from their destinations;
- 3) At least one lecturer had to visit each institution regularly to check on the progress of their students.

The significance of university-trained specialists on the programmes at ‘correctional’ institutions after 1946, as well as on the ideas and processes that informed the development of this system of institutional provision, must not be underestimated. The ‘theoretical ideas’ that were being debated and formulated at that time (particularly at Afrikaans-speaking universities) on issues of race inferiority, social maladjustment and mental backwardness, served to inform the programmes at the various ‘correctional’ institutions in significant ways. This will be further explored in Section B, Chapter 4.

It is significant here that the success of the programme of providing trained psychologists to conduct IQ tests at ‘correctional’ institutions led to the development of a close relationship between the University of Stellenbosch and ‘correctional’ institutions thereafter. In heaping praise on the success of the collaboration, the Secretary of Education noted in 1948 that:

Ek moet met u meedeel dat die sukses van die proefneming, wat in hierdie verband oor die afgelope twee jaar aan die verskillende skole onderneem is, as genoeg saam beskou word om te regverdig dat die skema nou op ‘n permanente basis ingestel word, en wel om die volgende redes. (*I want to say that the experiment that has been conducted at the various institutions over the past two years can be regarded as successful enough to warrant it being made a permanent arrangement*).¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/26, letter dated 23/11/1948 from the Secretary of Education to the Secretary of the Treasury

While each ‘correctional’ institution utilised teacher-psychologists to spearhead the psychological programmes of their various institutions, the services provided by the universities in support of the institutional programmes were regarded as indispensable. By 1959, when ‘coloured’ ‘correctional’ institutions were transferred to the Department of Coloured Affairs, a University of Stellenbosch official pointed out that state institutions could no longer do without the IQ testing carried out by their students.

Die diens (van hierdie studente) het tot dusver getoon dat dit ‘n waardevolle aanvulling is van die Departement se sielkundige dienste. Graag wil ons daarop wys dat die toetswerk wat deur die studente in die skole gedoen word die skole geweldig baie tyd bespaar, en hulle van inligting voorsien wat baie nuttig gebruik kan word. (*The services provided by these students have been a worthwhile addition to the psychological services provided by the Department. We would like to point out that the tests done conducted by the students at the various institutions not only saves the institutions a lot of time but also provides valuable information which can be profitably used*).¹⁷⁰

The chief psychologist at the Ottery School of Industries, JC Carstens, declared in 1960 that

Uit my eie ondervinding het ek geleer dat ‘n deeglike opleiding in die kliniese sielkunde waardevol is vir die tipe van werk wat aan hierdie skole gedoen word. (*From my personal experience I have learnt that a thorough training in clinical psychology is immensely valuable in the kind of work done at this institution*).¹⁷¹

Clearly, the emergence of psychological services in schools of industries and reformatories from 1946 impacted significantly on the policies of the Union Education Department at that time. It needs to be noted though that the Ottery School of Industries was only officially included in the Stellenbosch University

¹⁷⁰ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/26, letter dated 26/8/1959 from HG Van Niekerk to the Secretary of Coloured Affairs

¹⁷¹ The teacher-psychologists employed by the Union Education Department were expected to be able to apply the intelligence testing methods recommended by the National Bureau of Social Research. The tests included the new South African Group Test, The individual Scale Test, and reading and language tests. Men teacher-psychologists were expected to have a Masters degree, or at least a Bachelor degree with a Diploma in Education. Women were required to “at least have a Bachelors degree with psychology as a major. See CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/26, letter dated 18/1/1960 from JC Carstens to the Secretary of Coloured Affairs. JC Carstens obtained his doctoral degree in psychology at the University of Cape Town in 1965. In early 1969 he was promoted to the position of Principal of the Ottery School of Industries.

programme as of 1959. The relationship between the two institutions was only made official in 1959 after IQ tests had been ‘adapted’ to address the special needs of the ‘coloured’ boys. By that time, psychologists and university students claimed that they had developed ‘special tests’ that would not overly disadvantage the ‘coloured’ child.¹⁷² These tests were ‘adapted’ based on the observation by education officials that the South African Group Test could not be used to test the IQ levels of ‘coloured’ boys. Education Inspector CH de C. Murray had noted in 1958 that:

Die verstandmeting van kleurlingseuns bly ‘n probleem omdat daar geen verstandstoetse is wat vir kleurlinge gestandiseer is nie. Die Goodenough Man-teken toets word gebruik, maar die resultate is ombevreidigend. Weens die swak skolastiese vermoë van die meeste Kleurling leerlinge is die nuwe Suid-Afrikaanse Groeptoets nie op Kleurlinge gestandiseer nie. (*The measuring of the IQ level of ‘coloured’ boys remains a problem simply because there are no IQ tests that have been standardised for ‘coloured’ children. The Goodenough Draw-a-Man test is presently used, but the results are unsatisfactory. Because of the weak scholastic ability of most ‘coloured’ pupils, the new South African Group test has not been standardised for ‘coloureds’.*)¹⁷³

b) The establishment of a school of industries for ‘african’ boys

In 1947 a report in the *Rand Daily Mail* “about a proposal to establish an industrial school” for ‘natives’ on the Rand elicited numerous enquiries as to how this institution would impact on the services provided by the Orlando Vocational Training School.¹⁷⁴ Noting the existence of the Orlando Vocational Training School, many people involved in providing child care facilities to ‘african’ boys wanted to know what the Union Education Department’s plans were to prevent duplicating, overlapping or competition between the two ‘services’.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Carstens noted that “one of the reasons for this, if not the most important reason, is that newly-appointed White psychologists do not really want to work with Coloureds”. See CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/26, letter dated 18/1/1960 from JC Carstens to the Secretary of Coloured Affairs

¹⁷³ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/19/8, “*Inspeksieverslae- Sielkundige dienste*”, Inspection Report of Murray dated 30/4/1958

¹⁷⁴ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E14/19C/1, letter dated 17 May 1947 from LI Venables, Manager of the ‘Non-European’ Affairs department of the City of Johannesburg, to the Secretary of Education

¹⁷⁵ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E14/19C/1, letter dated 26/5/1947(a reply to MJ Smith) from Union Education Department.

A letter from VLD Mallie to the Union Education Department in 1948 also demonstrated an unfamiliarity with what the provision of a school of industries entailed, and indicated a very ‘loose’ association of vocational schooling and training with ‘training in character, ethics and citizenship’.¹⁷⁶ Mallie requested that the Union Education Department establish a school of industries for ‘african’ boys in Natal.¹⁷⁷

It is significant that in the period after the Second World War, there were many calls for the establishment of technical training facilities for ‘non-white’ youths. Given the absence of such facilities in South Africa until that time, and based on the focus on urban social order needs at that time, it was not surprising that the calls by various groupings for technical education were articulated as calls for schools of industries.

In correspondence with the Union Education Department in 1948, the South African Institute of Race Relations wanted to know whether government industrial schools were going to be provided for ‘natives’ (as was the case for ‘coloured’ boys). The Union Education Department then informed the SAIRR that already in 1945 it had initiated plans to establish a school of industries for ‘native’ boys.

‘n Nywerheidskool vir 250 Naturelle-leerlinge sal opgerig moet word teen ‘n beraamde koste van 125 000 pond. Soos reeds vermeld word hierdie kamp nog nie gebruik nie, en die behoefde aan so ‘n skool is nou nog dringer as voorheen. (*A school of industries for 250 ‘native pupils’ will have to be established at a cost of about 125 000 pounds. As noted previously, this camp (at Lenz) is not presently being used, and the need for such an institution is more urgent than ever.*)¹⁷⁸

It had been envisaged that a ‘native’ industrial school would be established at the Cape Corps military camp at Lenz, outside Johannesburg in 1946. A report of 21/5/1945 noted that there was an urgent need for additional buildings to be attached

¹⁷⁶ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E14/19C/1, letter dated 3/8/1948

¹⁷⁷ Mallie referred to the proposed institution as an industrial school. The Union Education Department at that time interpreted the reference to mean a school of industries. See PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E14/19C/1, letter dated 3/8/1948

to the Diepkloof Reformatory (for 'african' boys), to house the younger non-delinquent boys¹⁷⁹. It was asserted that the provision of a school of industries adjoining the reformatory would ease the problems of overcrowding that the institution was experiencing.¹⁸⁰ At that time it was also argued that boys at Diepkloof needed to be differentiated into

- 1) Boys who were of the criminal type (100 boys of 19-21 years);
- 2) Delinquent boys committed to the reformatory for petty thieving or simple uncontrollability (400 boys of 14-18 years);
- 3) Pre-delinquent boys sent to Diepkloof because of the absence of alternative social institutions (250 boys under 14 years).¹⁸¹

Even though the Minister of Education, J Hofmeyr, had 'approved' the conversion of the 'Coloured' Cape Corps camp at Lenz into a school of industries for 'natives' in late 1947, many factors ensured that this conversion never materialised.¹⁸² Initially the camp could not be transferred to the Union Education Department, as the Defence Department still needed to move the ammunition supplies and explosives from the camp at Lenz. When by 1950 the Defence Department had still not vacated the camp, the Union Education Department wrote to the Department of Native Affairs for assistance in ensuring the release of the land. These efforts to establish a school of industries for 'african' pupils came to nought. It would seem that the correspondence from the Union Education Department to the Department of Native Affairs during the 1950s was largely ignored. In 1957 the Union Education Department was informed that all envisaged industrial schools and reformatories for 'native' children would in future fall under the Native Affairs Department (NAD). The Union Government attitude at the time was that it "is doubtful whether Bantu boys could profitably be subjected to the same type of daily routine of schooling,

¹⁷⁸ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/11, "Report on the available camps for industrial schools in 1945"

¹⁷⁹ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/11, "Inspeksieverslae- 1947-1965"

¹⁸⁰ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E14/19C/1, letters dated 4/6/1947 and 16/6/1947 from Inspector Op't Hof to the SAIRR

¹⁸¹ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E14/19C/1, letters dated 4/6/1947 and 16/6/1947 from Inspector Op't Hof to the SAIRR

¹⁸² PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E14/19C/1, letters dated 26/3/1956, 2/5/1956, 21/6/1956, 26/10/1956, 15/5/1957 and 17/10/1961

workshop training and sports as the European culture demands for European boys”.¹⁸³

With regard to the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in 1948, the failure to provide a school of industries for ‘african’ children reflected confusion among the public, as well as within professional agencies, about what this form of ‘schooling’ constituted. The perception that schools of industries simply provided “trade training in a disciplined setting”, contributed in significant ways to calls for the provision of such institutions after 1945.¹⁸⁴

Conclusion

The establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in Cape Town in 1948 represented a complex development. It was informed by the interaction of ideas and processes that were located in many constituencies and policy disciplines. In Section B and Section C it will be explained in greater detail how these ideas and processes evolved in South Africa and variously came to inform the lives of ‘coloured’ boys deemed by Children’s Courts to be ‘in need of care’.

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¹⁸³ PA, SAB UOD, Ref:E14/19C/1, letters dated 15/5/1957 and 17/10/1961

¹⁸⁴ The Secretary for Social Welfare had noted in 1940 that this is the “type of school of which the public seems on the whole to be badly informed, for sometimes it is confused with an ordinary trade school and sometimes with a reformatory”. See Union of South Africa (1940), *Report of the Department of Social Welfare for the period 1937 to 1939*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.26)

Section B

Ottery Problematised

Chapter 1: *Key Ideas that have informed the nature of punishment and penal practice in South Africa*

Chapter 2: *The Emergence of Industrial Schools in South Africa. The Children's Act and the Union Education Department*

Chapter 3: *Psychologising the 'Industrial' Child*

Chapter 4: *Technical and Vocational Education in South Africa: Education and Training in the context of the social-democratic ideals of the 1940s*

Chapter 1

**Key Ideas that have
informed the nature of
Punishment and Penal
Practice in South Africa**



Introduction

The nature of punishment¹⁸⁵ in South African society is a deeply problematic aspect of social life. That the issue is not always perceived in this light is the consequence of the obscuring and reassuring effect of the existence of established ‘correctional’ institutions. Given that the ways of ‘punishing’ in South African society have traditionally been taken for granted, there has been very little analysis of why and how institutions like prisons, reformatories, schools of industries, and hostels, and traditions like probation, non-penal custodial (state) care and fines, were developed in the first place.¹⁸⁶

In contemporary South Africa, institutions that have been traditionally set aside for the ‘correction’ of those deemed to transgress the laws of the country conveniently provide ready-made answers for what criminality is, how it will be sanctioned, and how much ‘punishment’ is appropriate. The troublesome and difficult questions as to the nature and purpose of the ‘correction’ and punishment do not arise simply because they have already been ‘authoritatively settled’.¹⁸⁷ Invariably, matters of detail as to the logistics and problems of institutionalisation have been ‘resolved’ by the involvement of the experts and the specialists that work with such institutions.

Yet what is the social meaning of punishment and penal institutions in South African society? What is the source of authority for punishment and the basis of its social support? David Garland has noted that

We need to recognise that like other social institutions, punishment displays a complexity of function and a richness of meaning. It is a form of life that

¹⁸⁵ Institutions of punishment in South Africa include penal (prisons, reformatories) and non-penal state custodial provisions such as orphanages, hostels and schools of industries. While the latter group does not fall under the administrative authority of the penal authorities, they form part of the legal framework that addresses the needs of indigent and ‘uncontrollable’ children, and so are also concerned with ‘surveillance’ and ‘regulation’.

¹⁸⁶ Douglas, M. (1986). *How Institutions Think*. (New York: Syracuse), pp.65-70; The exception here would be the doctoral work of Linda Chisholm. See Chisholm, L (1989), *Reformatories and Industrial Schools in South Africa: A Study in Class, Colour and Gender, 1882-1939*, (Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand: unpublished doctoral thesis)

¹⁸⁷ Garland, D (1990a), *Punishment and Modern Society: A Study in Social Theory*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, p.3)

can yield a suprisingly rich crop of insights and illuminations about the society in which it takes place and about the people whom it involves.¹⁸⁸

The lack of a detailed history of the nature of punishment and penal institutions in South Africa, alongside the absence of relevant local literature, imposed particular limitations on this study. Without such ‘grounding’, it was difficult to provide clear indications of the origin of the ideas and patterns that has characterised the penal system in South Africa. This chapter will thus outline, in separate and very straightforward ways, the various local and international ideas and processes that have informed penal practice in South Africa.

The provision of a ‘correctional’¹⁸⁹ institution like the Ottery School of Industries is thus located both within the larger debates about the history of punishment in modern society, and within the mesh of processes and ideas that informed the emergence of penal practice in South Africa from the 1880s. In this regard, the chapter is handled under three broad headings that signal the key categories of analysis.

The first section focuses on the nature of punishment in modern society, as articulated by theorists like Michel Foucault. It is not attempted here to present and analyse Foucault’s central thesis on punishment. Rather, this section focuses on Foucaultian concepts that have direct relevance to the study, and that can serve as an explanatory platform for the analysis of penal practice in South Africa. For example, Foucault’s ‘explanation’ for the way in which the ‘coterminous influences’ of particular communities came to inform the sentencing of transgressors (from that community), is of particular interest here. This Foucaultian ‘explanation’ is clearly evident in arguments that are made in Chapter 2 of Section B as well as in Section C. It is asserted there that the analysis of the ‘bad social conditions’ under which the ‘coloured’ working class lived and the characterisation of ‘coloureds’ as

¹⁸⁸ Garland (1990a), p.2

¹⁸⁹ ‘Correctional’ is understood here as (a) the desire to educate, reform and discipline, and (b) an aspect of the legal framework of a country which seeks to provide for delinquent as well as those that require state care (such as orphans, maltreated and indigent children)

“inherently criminal”, substantially informed the institutionalisation of large numbers of ‘coloured’ boys after 1948. It is argued that the ‘adaptation’ of childcare policy to suit what was deemed to be the needs of ‘coloured’ children at that time was partly derived from this aspect of penal development.

The second section focuses on the interaction between the construction of mechanisms of racial hegemony in colonial South Africa and the development of a penal system that could harness and control the consequences of rapid social change. In this regard, punishment is linked to three broad developments that emerged alongside the construction of a modernising society from the turn of the twentieth century. These developments included (a) indigency, (b) the reliance on the ‘authority of scientific assessment’ and education, and (c) the notion of preparing citizens for work in order that they later not be a burden to the state. The ways in which these developments interacted with the socio-economic and political contexts in South Africa from 1910 shaped childcare policy in significant ways. For example, social relief programmes (of consequence) were only provided for the ‘non-white’ population after the Second World War. Informed by a complex mixture of ideas and processes, this development not only led to an exclusive focus from 1910 on the needs of the ‘poor white’ population in South Africa, but also identified the ‘non-white’ population as ‘unworthy’ and ‘inferior’. It will be argued in Section C that the social needs of the ‘non-white’ population were primarily addressed from the 1940s in the context of the complex interaction between the provision of welfare and social democracy, and the fear of urban decay. The rapid urbanisation of large numbers of ‘non-whites’ engendered a ‘fear of social chaos’ amongst the urban and predominantly ‘white’ populations, and notably informed the provision of ‘correctional’ institutions for ‘non-white’ children thereafter.

The third category addresses the ways in which the evolving punishment system in South Africa was both constituted by, and informed academic criminological thought during the twentieth century. Dirk Van Zyl Smit has argued that the two criminological traditions that informed the development of penal practice in South

Africa from 1910, namely Legal Reformism and Afrikaner Nationalism, interacted in complex ways to impact on the development of social policy thereafter. For example, a notable feature of both traditions of criminological thinking was that “Afrikaners and English could work together and through enterprise build a new nation within the broader imperial framework. This consensus, with its neo-classical emphasis on formal equality before the law, was thought of as including primarily the European races (British and Boer).”¹⁹⁰ In this conception ‘whites’ that committed crimes were regarded as a serious social problem. It was asserted though that their needs could be resolved by the provision of a range of social welfare programmes. Indigent ‘non-whites’ however were regarded within both traditions as ‘the white man’s burden’. In this regard, it was asserted that ‘non-whites’ needed to be ‘kept’ under strict and constant surveillance. This may explain, to a limited degree, the emphasis on the provision of penal/ ‘correctional’ institutions for ‘non-white’ children from the 1940s.

It is asserted that the interaction of the key concepts prevalent under the three headings that signal the key categories of analysis, provided a grid of ideas that informed the ways in which the needs of indigent and pre-delinquent ‘coloured’ boys were addressed after 1948.

The study takes as its starting point the time in the nineteenth century when the role of imprisonment was redefined. At that time the modern state ceased to inflict pain as a direct form of social control and instead focused on ‘reforming’ the attitudes and morals of those deemed to have transgressed through the controlled environments of prisons and other social institutions. It was asserted at that time that by ‘rehabilitating’ the ‘deviant’ and the ‘anti-social’ individual, society as a whole could be regulated.

¹⁹⁰ Van Zyl Smit, D (1990), ‘Contextualising criminology in contemporary South Africa’, in Hansson, D and Van Zyl Smit, D (eds), *Towards Justice: Crime and Social Control in South Africa*, (Cape Town, Oxford University Press, pp.5-6)

Category 1: Punishment and Modern Society

What is Punishment?

Punishment or penal practice is not simply about punishing wrongdoers. It is also not philosophy-in-action or a materialised morality. In this study, punishment and its practice is addressed as

- a) A social institution that expresses ‘social sentiments’ and ‘social urges’ in response to social problems associated with crime;
- b) A set of determinate institutions, practices, agencies and sanctions, all of which embody a whole series of objectives, as well as definite techniques, knowledge and ideological significance.¹⁹¹

Punishment and Theory

The notion of punishment embodies and condenses a range of purposes and a stored-up depth of historical meaning. According to Nietzsche,¹⁹² in order to understand punishment at any one time, “one has to explore its many dynamics and forces, and build up a complex picture of the circuits of meaning and action within which it currently functions”. In this regard, the term *penality*, coined by Michel Foucault in 1977, will be used.¹⁹³ Foucault does not provide a precise definition of the term *penality*. Garland and Young have characterised the term as the study relating to “the social foundations of the practices and institutions of punishment, and of the realm where particular institutions and knowledges interact to bring about a particular understanding of social discipline”.¹⁹⁴ *Penality* then is a concept whereby the connections between various types of punishment systems are theorised.

¹⁹¹ Garland (1990a), p.284

¹⁹² Nietzsche, F (1956), *The Genealogy of Morals*, (New York, p.212). Cited in Garland (1990a), p.17

¹⁹³ Foucault, M (1977), *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, (Aylesbury, Hazell Watson and Vinney Ltd)

¹⁹⁴ Garland, D. and Young, P. (1983), “Towards a social analysis of *penality*’ in Garland, D and Young, P (eds), *The Power to Punish*, (London, Heinemann, p.10). Also see Garton, S (1988), “The State, Labour Markets and Incarceration: A Critique” in Findlay M and Hogg R (eds), *Understanding Crime and Criminal Justice*, (Sydney, Law Book Company, p.310). See also Garland, D (1990a), p.17

Penality

Michel Foucault (1977) and Michael Ignatieff (1978)¹⁹⁵ have advanced perhaps the most powerfully argued thesis about the origins and characteristics of Western European punishment systems, or *penality*. Although they clearly differed in their emphases, they asserted that by 1850¹⁹⁶ the French and English prisons had become mechanisms for quarantining, surveying and demarcating deviants, and for subjecting them to tightly regulated disciplinary processes aimed at promoting the social order. Forsythe has noted that:

Both insisted that by 1850 the prison had become a major element in a much wider process of institutional encirclement of the poor, part of a potent new drive to subjugate human personality by a general awesome penetrative operationalisation of the human sciences and the deployment of power.¹⁹⁷

Foucault in particular set about showing the way in which official discourses of punishment had come to shape and dominate understanding of modern punishment systems. Foucault argued that the emphasis on issues of rationality, efficiency, and humanitarianism from the 1850s meant that punishment in modern society then became concerned not only with ‘correcting’ individuals, but also with ‘producing’ individuals¹⁹⁸. Punishment was seen to produce “the domain of objects and rituals of truth” of societies and, in so doing, it constituted individuals.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ Ignatieff, M (1978), *A Just Measure of Pain: The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850* (New York, Pantheon). Other key revisionist texts in the field of *penality* are Rothman, David (1971), *Discovery of the Asylum* (Boston, Little, Brown) and Rothman, D (1980), *Conscience and Convenience. The Asylum and its Alternatives in Progressive America* (Boston, Little, Brown)

¹⁹⁶ There has been much debate about the periodisation assumed by Foucault. Garland argues that, for England at least, the prison only became a major part of the wider process that sought to deal with the social problems of society between 1895 and 1914. See Garland, D (1985), *Punishment and Welfare: a History of Penal Strategies*, (Aldershot, Gower). Forsythe has also noted that both Foucault and Ignatieff did not distinguish enough between the practices that mostly took place in prisons and the rhetoric of the state. See Forsythe, W (1987), *The Reform of Prisoners*, (Croom Helm, Beckenham, pp.92-3). Ignatieff conceded this in his article, Ignatieff, M (1983), “ State, Civil Society and Total Institutions: A Critique of Recent Social Histories of Punishment”, in Cohen, S and Scull, A (eds), *Social Control and the State*, (Oxford, Robertson, pp.75-105)

¹⁹⁷ Forsythe, W (1989), ‘National Socialists and the English Prison Commission: The Berlin Penitentiary Congress of 1935’, *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, 17: p.131

¹⁹⁸ This ‘process’ was also taking place in institutions such as the factory, the asylum, the army and the school offered similar scrutiny at that time. Rothman has described a revolution in social practice in the fledgling United State of America after 1820 that led to the construction of a network of interrelated institutions of various kinds. Rothman asserted that there emerged amongst newly independent Americans at that time a desire to not only punish criminals, but to reconstruct an

The individual is no doubt the fictitious atom of an ideological representation of society; but he is also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power that I have called 'discipline'. We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production."²⁰⁰

Foucault's key assertion in relation to punishment was that the reform of punishment systems in modernising societies from the 1850s was a key aspect of social reform at that time. Significantly, the development of policies or strategies of social reform that focused on the provision of law and order at that time were all part of a wider picture of the rational organisation of society.²⁰¹ Penal practice thence also came to involve aspects of social regulation by acting "in depth on the heart, the thoughts, the will and the inclinations of the prisoner".²⁰² In this regard, the emergence of the disciplines of psychiatry and criminology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries greatly influenced the reform of punishment systems. At that time the influence of psychiatry and scientific analysis transformed the determination of guilt of a prisoner into a "strange scientifico-judicial complex", whereby a "whole new system of truth" became embedded in the exercise of criminal justice. In this way, a whole body of knowledge, techniques and 'scientific discourses' became entangled with the 'power to punish'.²⁰³

ordered society that was perceived to have existed previously. Americans at that time pushed for the construction of institutions that would reproduce this idealised social order. Rothman noted the emergence from 1820 of:

Penitentiaries for the criminal, asylums for the insane, almshouses for the poor, orphan asylums for homeless children and reformatories for delinquents.

See Rothman (1971), p. xiii. It is important to note here that 'reformers' of this kind were often conservatives who regarded themselves as reconstructing an idealised moral order from some past time. With regard to the US from the 1820s, the influence of this particular English-speaking WASP moral order (that was being reinforced) had considerable implications for the nature and development of North American society in the twentieth century. See for example Katz, M (1968), *The Irony of Early School Reform in Massachusetts*, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press)

¹⁹⁹ Foucault (1977), p.131

²⁰⁰ Foucault (1977), p.194

²⁰¹ These reforms were an intrinsic aspect of wider trends in Western industrial societies in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, found in a spectrum of writings from Charles Dickens to Erving Goffman, and were part of the legacy of the Enlightenment period.

²⁰² Foucault (1977), pp.15-17

²⁰³ Howe, A (1994), *Punish and Critique: Towards a Feminist analysis of Penalty*, (London, Routledge, pp.87-88)

Previously, a ‘transgressor’ was simply subjected to physical punishment once his guilt had been ‘determined’. From 1850 onwards, the reform of punishment systems meant that when courts sought to determine what to do with an accused, they increasingly addressed the passions, instincts, infirmities, and previous maladjustments of the accused in formulating their judgements. While such investigations were supposedly only used to explain the actions of the accused in question, it was in fact these passions and anomalies that over time came to be judged and punished. Via the growing influence of the scientifico-juridical process, the accused’s past and ‘inner self’ was not introduced into the trial merely to explain the offence and used as a factor in the judicial apportioning of responsibility. Rather, this ‘history’, as well as the crime itself, significantly ‘determined’ the final judgement and the degree of punishment.²⁰⁴

The individual transgressor then came to be defined in terms of the knowledge of that person, the ‘estimation’ of the transgressor and what was known about the relations between the person, his past and the ‘misdemeanour’. Punishment was thus based on an estimation of what might be expected of the person in the future. Foucault noted:

They are punished by means of a punishment that has the function of making the offender ‘not only desirous, but also capable, of living within the law and of providing for his own needs’; they are punished by the internal economy of the penalty which, while intended to punish the crime, may be altered according to changes in the prisoner’s behaviour; and they are punished by the ‘security measures’ that accompany the penalty, and which are intended not to punish the offence, but to supervise the individual, to neutralise his dangerous state of mind, to alter his criminal tendencies, and to continue even when this change has been achieved.²⁰⁵

Subsequently, the inquiry addressed more than whether the ‘committed act’ had been established and whether it was punishable. It was no longer simply about

²⁰⁴ Foucault (1977), p.17

²⁰⁵ Foucault (1977), p.18

“Who committed it?” but also focused on “how the causal process that produced it could be assigned”:

Where did it originate in the author himself? Instinct, unconscious, environment, hereditary? What law punishes this crime? What would be the most appropriate measures to take? How do we see the future development of the offender? What would be the best way of rehabilitating him?²⁰⁶

By then locating the individual within a particular community, the transgressor could be ‘tracked’ and subjected to measurement, assessment, diagnosis, cure and transformation, based on what was known about the particular community and the socio-economic context. In this way, it was not only the person that required analysis, but also his/her community that had been identified as ‘the source of the problem’.

By lodging a whole set of “assessing, diagnostic, prognostic, normative judgements, concerning the criminal” within the framework of penal judgement, the “penitentiary technique” was displaced from penal institutions to the entire social body. Even more significant was the way in which mechanisms of ‘normalisation’, via the disciplines of psychological services and social work, then ‘labelled’ those that transgressed society’s dictates as both ‘bad’ and ‘abnormal’. This, asserted Foucault, was “a much more subtle form of power.”²⁰⁷

Foucault’s thesis is indeed a powerful one. There have however been many criticisms of his work.²⁰⁸ The ongoing debates about the various problems in his

²⁰⁶ Foucault (1977), pp.20

²⁰⁷ Foucault (1977), p.298

²⁰⁸ Various aspects of Foucault’s work have been criticised. For example, Foucault argues that prison reformers and their language of humanitarianism was an integral part of the social structures of institutional control that sought to subjugate and control the human personality. This is clearly too structuralist, especially when viewed in relation to the political climate and the link to theory in the twenty-first century. See Forsythe (1989), p.142. In this regard, Garland asserts that Foucault has produced an over-rational, over-calculated conception of punishment in which the primary determinants of punishment are the requirements of social control. Garland argues that a more complex conception of penalty is required if society and the way it ‘works’ is to be understood. See Garland (1990), p.229. It will be argued in Section C that a more-nuanced ‘reading’ of the actions of reformers is required if the nature of social institutions in modern society is to be understood. Moreover, Chisholm notes that Foucault’s notion of power in society “dissolves the link between

work are not pursued here. Rather, the basic tenets of Foucault's thesis are used to simply assert that from the late nineteenth century within punishment systems in modernising societies a significant generality occurred between the least irregularity and the greatest crime. From the late 1890s, it was no longer the offence or the attack that warranted state intervention, but rather the departure from the norm (the anomaly) that came to 'haunt' the prison, asylum, court and school.

Replacing the adversary of the sovereign, the social enemy was transformed into a deviant, who brought with him the multiple danger of disorder, crime and madness.²⁰⁹

The physical body of the transgressor had by that time become caught up in a system of "constraints and privations, obligations and prohibitions." Punishment had become an "economy of suspended rights, in which a whole army of technicians (whether that was the warder, the doctor, the chaplain, the psychiatrist, or the educationalist) had taken over from the executioner."²¹⁰ The influence of 'scientific knowledge' on the judicial system then served to transpose punishment into a "correction, a therapy and a normalisation."²¹¹ In this regard, Ignatieff has argued that there was a remarkable resemblance between the function of the prison in modern societies and the envisaged role of the school, the factory and the hospital.

power and oppression and desire and liberation. It therefore dissolves the political content of the terms themselves and more or less eliminates the central dialectic of opposed forces that still underlies modern society". See Chisholm (1989), p.18; Also Dews, P (1984), "Power and Subjectivity in Foucault", *New Left Review*, 144, March-April 1984, p.93 and Said, E (1983), *The World, the Text and the Critic*, (London, p.221). Furthermore, Foucault was criticised for regarding punishment as being shaped almost exclusively by strategic considerations of the political order. See Spierenberg, P (1984), *The Spectacle of Suffering: Executions and the Evolution of Repression*, (Cambridge, p.191). Also, Sumner has asserted that Foucault "at best missed a great opportunity in *Discipline and Punish* to understand the construction and role of gender categories in the establishment of the modern state. He notes that Foucault's concept of normalisation doesn't adequately address the role of the censure of women and femininity in the 'hegemonic discourses' that constitute the economic and political fabric of the modern state". See Sumner, C (1990), "Foucault, gender and the censure of deviance", in Gelsthorpe L and Morris A (eds), *Feminist Perspectives in Criminology*, (Milton Keynes, Open University Press, pp.30-31)

²⁰⁹ Foucault (1977), p.300

²¹⁰ Howe (1994), p.87

²¹¹ 'Normalisation' constitutes a continual analysis of whether the 'accused' has deviated from normality. While laws put limits on what is acceptable or not, normalisation serves to label those that transgress society's dictates as abnormal, and thus works on the individual from within. See Fillingham, LA (1993), *Foucault for Beginners*, (London, Airlift Books, p.125). Also see Foucault (1977), 306

Is it surprising that the cellular prison, with its regular chronologies, forced labour, surveillance and regulation has become the instrument of penalty? Is it surprising that prisons resemble schools, factories, barracks and hospitals, which all resemble prisons?²¹²

This ‘new function’ of punishment subsequently informed the provision of ‘corrective institutions’ in ways that conjoined the order of sin with the order of crime,²¹³ and perpetuated the image that delinquency and crime stood for all forms of confusion and disorder.²¹⁴ In so doing, moral tales of order as well as the emotions they generated became deeply imbricated within disciplinary systems and the knowledge about the way they ‘worked’.²¹⁵ For example, virtue was converted into a ‘question and object’ for social administration and legal regulation, simply by the production of a categorical table of deviations that ran from treason to bad table manners. In this system, Foucault has noted, rudeness was placed in the same disciplinary field as multiple-homicide.²¹⁶

If there is an overall political issue around the prison, it is not therefore whether it is to be corrective or not; whether the judges, the psychiatrists or the sociologists are to exercise more power in it than the administrators or supervisors; it is not even whether we should have a prison or something other than prison. At present, the problem lies rather in the steep rise in the use of these mechanisms of normalization and the wide-ranging powers which, through the proliferation of new disciplines, they bring with them.²¹⁷

Sumner has asserted that this development within penal practice was crucial to the growth of the sociology of deviance in the USA in the period 1937 to 1968. In that period, “broad images of disease, the devil, crime and treason were intellectually ‘transformed’ into neutral-sounding deviations, which were allegedly curable by psychiatry, social work and social policy”.²¹⁸ It is apparent then that punishment as

²¹² Ignatieff (1983), p.171

²¹³ Sumner (1990), p.27

²¹⁴ Foucault (1977), p.199

²¹⁵ Sumner (1990), p.28

²¹⁶ Foucault M. (1977) p.305

²¹⁷ Foucault M. (1977) p.306

²¹⁸ Sumner (1990), p.27

a social institution was significantly informed by the dominant discourses of the society in which it was practiced.²¹⁹

History and 'Punishment'

Studies that analyse the social foundations of punishment systems are mostly firmly grounded within “critical revisionist critique”.²²⁰ The history provided below attempts to locate the work of Foucault and his contemporaries within the context in which they wrote. Although it is brief and includes too many generalisations, the insertion of this ‘history’ serves as a ‘useful bridge’ between the theory of Foucault and the social contexts of punishment in South Africa in the twentieth century.

Consensual interpretations of the history of punishment systems have always taken for granted that historical ‘advances’ in penal provision have been part of the process of improvement and upliftment of society. Those engaged in penal reform were thus frequently characterised as admirable reformers, who effected change from ‘barbarism to enlightenment’, from ‘ignorance to scientific and professional expertise’, from ‘cruelty to humanitarian concern’, and from ‘no facilities to numerous services’.

Since the re-publication of Ruschke and Kirchheimer’s *Punishment and Social Structure*²²¹ in 1968, there has been considerable growth of the literature in western academic circles with regard to the historical treatment of various forms of deviance and punishment. Considerable strides have been made in understanding the

²¹⁹ Garland, D (1990b), “Frameworks of inquiry in the sociology of punishment”, *British Journal of Sociology*, 41(1), pp.10-12

²²⁰ Howe (1994), pp.63-73

²²¹ Many regard Georg Rusche and Otto Kirchheimer’s seminal work, which was first published in 1939, as the founding text for critical analysis of the history of punishment. It’s republication in 1968 symbolised a concern to formulate a general political economic theory of punishment, and was part of the wider theoretical concern to articulate a marxist theory of ‘social totality’. The aim was to move the debate beyond the capitalist “mode of production” to an analysis of the way capitalist social relations structured the entirety of cultural life. Ruschke and Kirchheimer note: “The penal system is not an isolated phenomenon but an integrated part of a social whole”. See Ruschke G and Kirchheimer O (1968), *Punishment and Social Structure*, (New York, Russell & Russell, p.207)

development and changes in social systems designed to treat, care for or control those people designated as ‘different’ or ‘deviant’ from dominant social norms.

Since the 1970s there has also been a surge of interest in the history of social welfare and penal institutions, to the extent that it has become a distinct field of social history. As with other fields of study, the boundaries of this new institutional history are amorphous and flexible. They encompass but have not been restricted to studies of crime, poverty, benevolence, education, dependency, youth, insanity and the mentally disabled. These works have set out to explore in rich detail the association between the reformer, the penal establishment (including the asylum, orphanage, industrial school) and society.

This wide historical movement has sought to critically ‘expose’ the political bias of the representation of past reform as a story of progress. Social historians,²²² as they have become known, sought to show that effected transformations in punishment were not alone due to the stated intentions of moral reformers. It was also not simply attributable to a growing humanitarian concern. They asserted that such ‘reforms’ also involved an expanded and pervasively subtle form of control over increasingly differentiated forms of deviance.²²³

Via a critical history of past and present penal regimes, where punishment was addressed as a social and political process, these social historians endeavoured to theoretically move away from basic (elementary), functionalist or biologist theories of crime or madness. By scrutinising the political and social conditions, and its effects, of punishment, they set about questioning the eternal necessity of

Also see Howe, A (1994), *Punish and Critique: Towards a Feminist Analysis of Penalty*, (London, Routledge, pp.12-25)

²²² Howe raises many questions about the ‘social’ within social historical analyses of punishment, noting that gender aspects of the broad field of punishment, and feminist interventions in the field, have (hitherto) been disregarded. Howe also notes that social ‘revisionist’ historians are generally uncomfortable with their work being all clustered together. See Howe (1994), p.3 and p.55; For a breakdown of the divisions between ‘revisionists’, see Cohen, C (1985), *Visions of Social Control*, (Cambridge, Polity Press)

²²³ Howe (1994), p.47

punishment, as well as the perception that punishment was natural and unchanging. Crucially, they emphasised that punishment was a culturally and historically specific phenomenon.²²⁴

While the central criticism of these ‘revisionists’ revolved around their politicisation of punishment,²²⁵ their contribution to the study of punishment has been their desire to theoretically transform the study of punishment into the social analysis of penalty (thus replacing penology as the most pertinent field of inquiry into punishment). Their essential contributions have been their desire to irrevocably tie social theory to practice.²²⁶

In their pioneering work of 1938, Ruschke and Kirchheimer argued that:

Punishment is neither a simple consequence of crime, nor the reverse side of crime, nor a means that is determined by the end to be achieved. Punishment must be understood as a social phenomenon freed from both its juristic concept and its social ends. We do not deny that punishment has specific ends, but we do deny that it can be understood from its ends alone.²²⁷

In this regard, this chapter seeks to outline the links/hooks between the “whole series of objectives of punishment” prevalent in South Africa by that time, and the examination in Section C of the *institution, its practices, its agencies, and the sanctions that were used*.²²⁸

Category 2: The complex mesh of ideas that informed punishment regimes in South Africa in the

²²⁴ Howe (1994), p.80

²²⁵ A considerable literature exists on the danger of politicising history. An important critique, as argued by Tomlins, warns of the danger of over-politicising history and pasts that have been produced by ‘a surfeit of perspectives’. In this scenario, a politics on penalty cannot be read off from any particular critical historical account of past punishment regimes. See Tomlins, C (1985), “Whose law? What order? Historicist interventions in the war against ‘crime’”, *Law in Context*, 3: 130-147. Also see Howe (1994), p.80

²²⁶ Garland and Young (1983), p. 5

²²⁷ Ruschke and Kirchheimer (1968), p.5

²²⁸ Garland (1990a), p.284

twentieth century

After the mineral discoveries of the nineteenth century, Southern Africa underwent a metamorphosis that produced changes equivalent to, or “at least as harsh and disruptive as those in early industrial Britain.”²²⁹ As diamond mining became more complex, there was a far greater demand for labour. This was not freely available at that time. The ways in which the majority of the indigenous population (the ‘natives’) was systematically separated from their means of survival in the wake of the mineral discoveries on the Witwatersrand is well documented.²³⁰ Although many of the processes were much more complex and contradictory than is suggested here, it can be argued that within less than six or seven decades, hundreds of thousands of impoverished rural dwellers (who were mostly ‘african’) were reduced to the status of manual labourers in the towns, on the farms or on the mines.²³¹ In the climate of uncertainty that characterised socio-political change in the towns at that time, the prison as an institution of control then came to be regarded as a ‘solution’ whereby greater control could be exerted on those who laboured on the mines and in the towns. Van Onselen has noted that:

As in 18th and 19th century Britain, where the workhouse and the ‘dark satanic mills’ cast a long shadow, so South Africa spawned its own distinctively labour-repressive institutions as its industrial revolution gained momentum. Amongst these were the pass laws which were designed to restrict the mobility of black workers, and to help confine large numbers of them to the industrial barracks at the very heart of the new order, the mine compounds of the Witwatersrand (which accompanied the discovery of gold in the 1880s). This legislation not only ensured that the employee remained contractually bound to his employer at relatively low wages, but also made provision that, in the event of desertion, he could be incarcerated in another almost exclusively male institution- the prison. Collectively, these measures contributed greatly to the

²²⁹ Marks S and Rathbone R (1981)(eds), *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa: African Class Formation, Culture and Consciousness, 1870-1930*, (London, p.1)

²³⁰ See for example Turrell, R (1982b), “*Capital, Class and Monopoly: The Kimberley Diamond Fields, 1871-1889*”, (London, University of London: unpublished doctoral dissertation)

²³¹ Van Onselen, C (1985), “Crime and Total Institutions in the Making of Modern South Africa: the life of ‘Nongoloza’ Mathebula 1867-1948”, *History Workshop*, 19, 1985, p 62-81

development of an emerging working class culture richly informed by first-hand prison experience.²³²

At an ideological level, shifts in penal policy in the 1880s were also increasingly characterised by notions of ‘racial separation’ and ‘racial inferiority’. As the *Report of the Committee on Convicts and Gaols* noted in 1888:

The association of the Native with the European, [in prison] not only crushes out of the European what little moral feeling there may be left in him, by the sense of degradation, but lowers the whole race in the eyes of the Native, destroying the respect for us (Whites/colonisers) which we can never hope to succeed either as their rulers or as their preceptors, leading them in counsel and example into the higher life of civilisation.²³³

In this period, colonial policy sought to frame penal legislation in terms of the role and social position that was envisaged for the various ‘prisoners’, and according to their various levels of ‘civilisation’ and ‘usefulness’.²³⁴ The reform of the penal system at that time thence provided the beginnings (the tools) for the elaboration of a complex system of penal practices and censures. After 1910, the development of penal practice in South Africa was crucially informed by the meshing of contradictory and ambiguous social, political and economic policies.

Martin Legassick²³⁵ has pointed out that it was in during the reconstruction era after 1910 that many of the guidelines of twentieth-century segregationist policies were set out, both in relation to the town and countryside. The crucial ideas that informed change at that time were not however derived solely from the local context. They were also linked in significant ways to wider sets of assumptions that were held by British colonial rulers at the beginning of the twentieth century. The ideas of British rulers were drawn both from their reactions to class militancy in the United

²³² Van Onselen (1985), p.63

²³³ Cape of Good Hope (1888), ‘Second Report of the Committee on Convicts and Gaols G2-1888’, *Annexures to Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly Cape of Good Hope*. Cited in Van Zyl Smit (1986), p.156

²³⁴ For an analysis of the development of a penal system in a colonial setting at more or less the same time, see Pratt, J (1992), *Punishment in a Perfect Society: The New Zealand Penal System 1840-1939*, (Wellington, Victoria University Press)

Kingdom, Social Darwinism and the eugenics movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and from the exigencies of colour and class in the South African context. Imported to South Africa, Social Darwinism and eugenics provided thereafter a source of leverage for the cause of ‘poor white’ upliftment²³⁶ and a legitimization of the language of ‘white’ domination. At that time, as Marks and Trapido argue, the mining magnates of the Transvaal were calling for the establishment of institutions that would create ideological supports for the new economic order and reinforce the coercive machinery of the state.²³⁷

In 1910 Jacob De Villiers Roos²³⁸ had been appointed Director of Prisons with the mandate to defend the Union and the new order against ‘retrogression’ and ‘disorder’. His task was to devise a system of penal sanctions that would discipline the newly-created ‘non-white’ and ‘white’ working classes, as well as the youth who were regarded as the future working class. Roos attacked the question in three main ways:

- By defining the criminal population in South Africa;
- By defining how changes in the form of punishment would reduce the threat of crime to the state;

²³⁵ Legassick, M (1974), ‘British Hegemony and the Origins of Segregation, 1901-1914’, in *Institute of Commonwealth Studies: Collected Seminar Papers*, (London, University of London, p.12)

²³⁶ The concept of ‘poor whiteism’ is a complex ‘social category’ in that it lumps together very different groups of the ‘white’ population who were poor (bywoner, rural dwellers, unemployed urbanites) under one heading. After Union however, the term was used to link the relationship between Afrikaner Nationalism and the political strategy that was formulated to respond to ‘white’ poverty. Dubow asserts that ‘white’ material impoverishment served as an important comparative discursive site for the expression of ‘racial’ anxieties. See Dubow (1995), p.172

²³⁷ Marks, S and Trapido, S (1981), ‘Lord Milner and the South African State’, in Bonner, P (ed), *Working Papers in Southern African Studies, Volume 2* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, p.68); Also, Krikler has noted that the development of the modern state after 1910 was also determined by a need for the ‘unity of the white race’. Krikler has asserted that the “sense of self-preservation prevalent amongst Whites, especially Afrikaners, at the time was to an extent historically formed. The changing needs of the economy and society, class identity and interest meshed with the ‘instincts of self-preservation’ at that time, to produce new needs and ways of satisfying them”. See Krikler, J (1993), ‘Social Neurosis and Hysterical Pre-Cognition in South Africa: A Case Study and Reflections’, *South African Historical Journal*, 28, 1993, p.63 and p.95

²³⁸ Jacob De Villiers Roos was born at the Cape in 1869. As a university-educated Cape Afrikaner from a well-established family, Roos’ sympathies “tended towards alliance and compromise with British imperialism”. For more information on the life of De Villiers Roos, see Chisholm (1989), chapter 3, pp.89-10. The impact of the work of Roos is addressed later in the chapter.

- By emphasising the importance of the ‘reclamation’ of the youth.

Roos subsequently put into place mechanisms that served to significantly inform the development of a penal system (along modern lines) in South Africa. However, the ways in which Roos addressed the context of South Africa at that time was informed by the particular meshing of ideas about punishment by that time.

The ‘crucial’ Ideas that informed Punishment in South Africa

As late as 1979, a report of the Administration of Coloured Affairs²³⁹ in South Africa asserted that the central role of Schools of Industries was to ‘normalise’ pupils in a disciplined environment into internalising accepted social and cultural norms. The Report noted that the intervention programme provided at this type of ‘correctional institution’ emphasised the strict structuring of the daily routine of boys so that their basic physical, educational, emotional, and recreational requirements could be met. Their needs were identified in terms of a complex interaction between the indigency of the boys, their education and training needs, the degree of danger that they were deemed to pose to ‘normal’ society, their social status as ‘coloureds’ and working class boys, and the type of work that the boys would fulfil upon release from a school of industries.

This language of ‘rehabilitation’ has a long history in South Africa and was formulated over time in complex social, political and economic contexts. This language was also formulated in the context of a developing system of penal justice in South Africa that began in the 1890s and that was significantly linked to the construction of racial hegemony in colonial society after 1910. With regard to this development, both criminal justice practitioners and ‘other specialists’ involved in studying those living on the ‘margins of society’ were involved.

²³⁹ Adam, A (1979), *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Circumstances at all Welfare Institutions and Reform and Industrial Schools that fall under the Administration of Coloured Affairs*, (Cape Town, Coloured Persons Representative Council, p.5)

Van Zyl Smit has asserted that “for all its peculiar features, the South African penal system did not grow up in isolation from Western notions of punishment.” He noted that, “on the contrary, it would be possible to characterise the system as a product of these notions applied selectively in the crucial formative period in the nineteenth century as a rational response to the social and economic problems that the colonial government faced at that time”.²⁴⁰ In Britain in the late nineteenth century, notions of punishment entailed a complex mix of issues that significantly included ways of addressing the social relief and labour discipline needs of that society. These ideas were transposed to South Africa and other colonial contexts in very particular ways. Below, these ideas or components are used to frame the analysis of the punishment system that evolved from the late nineteenth century. In this regard, the punishment system was linked to

- a) The increased problems of indigency that came with industrialisation;
- b) The idea that ‘racial mixing’ in the colonial context ‘encouraged deviancy’;
- c) The notion of the ‘abnormal’, ‘diseased’ and ‘dangerous’ as determined by scientific investigation;
- d) The notion that work-training would better prepare those who transgressed.

a) *Punishment and indigency*

Foucault (1977) and Ignatieff (1978) have both asserted that at least since the seventeenth century, prisons, asylums and workhouses have been consistently used to confine and discipline the poor, the unemployed, the unemployable, the socially disadvantaged and the socially inept. They have argued that penal systems, besides their central function of ‘punishing’ those that transgressed the dominant social norms of society, were also used to regulate the general population beyond the criminal class by discursively establishing divisions between social groups, by reproducing particular values and upholding particular power relations. All this was done in the name of the war on crime and disorder.²⁴¹

²⁴⁰ Van Zyl Smit, D (1986), “Public Policy and the Punishment of Crime in a Divided Society: A Historical Perspective on the South African Penal System”, *Crime and Social Justice*, No.21-22, 1986, p.146

²⁴¹ Foucault (1977), p.200; Ignatieff (1978), p.221

In this regard, the rediscovery of poverty in Britain in the 1880s was particularly significant for South Africa. In Britain this development was characterised by varying interpretations of the causes and solutions of impoverishment. Whereas poverty had previously been identified as a product of moral failure, from the 1880s it was increasingly attributed to the physical and economic environment and thus (supposedly) solvable by ‘comprehensive social policies’. By 1880 social debate on poverty in England had come to focus on theories of urban degeneration. Stedman Jones has noted that the explanation for the condition of the poor at that time was said to lay in the pressures of urban life, and that “years of exposure to the decaying urban environment was supposed to have produced a ‘degenerate populace’ that was unfit to reach maturity, and that was set to multiply their kind.”²⁴² Stedman Jones asserts that perceptions derived from social theories of this kind were “present in the social attitudes of every grouping of social society in England at that time, from the Charity Organisation Society to the Social Democratic Federation.”²⁴³

Colin Bundy has argued that the concern about ‘white’ poverty in South Africa in the 1890s was thus not a unique phenomenon. While there was certainly a major shift in ruling class perceptions in South Africa at that time in relation to the nature of poverty, “this shift was analogous to the ideological developments in metropolitan Britain, and partly derived from them.”²⁴⁴

Bundy asserts, however, that in the South African colonial context, these altered perceptions about poverty were expressed in language that meshed the problems of poverty “with moral degradation and racial inferiority”. Moral degradation was regarded at that time as the root cause of poverty, delinquency and crime. Moral

²⁴² Stedman Jones (1971), *Outcast London: A Study in the Relationship between Classes in Victorian Society*, (Oxford, pp.285)

²⁴³ Stedman Jones (1971), p.288

²⁴⁴ Bundy, C (1986), “Vagabond Hollanders and Runaway Englishmen: White Poverty in the Cape before Poor Whiteism”, in Beinart W, Delius P, and Trapido S (eds), *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa, 1850 – 1930*, (Johannesburg, p.119)

degradation was also regarded as a consequence of the mixing of the ‘races’. Chisholm has noted that the “moral environs were seen to be as bad as the physical aspects and it was increasingly assumed that impoverished Whites had begun to assume the colour of their surroundings and had become submerged.”²⁴⁵

In South Africa, poverty was in this way not only criminalised, but also racialised. Poverty was essentially regarded as the domain of the ‘uncivilised’, the ‘degenerate’ and the ‘inferior’. The ‘rehabilitation’ of those sections of the ‘white’ population that were prone to poverty and crime was envisaged then to involve social policies that focused on their social and economic upliftment. These social policies also discouraged the (general) association of ‘white poor’ with the ‘non-white poor’ in urban environments. In Chapter 2 of Section B and in Section C, it is argued that the responses to the ‘poor white’ question after 1920 had profound consequences for the type of penal and welfare institutions that were provided for the ‘non-white’ population of South Africa.

b) Punishment and ‘Racial Mixing’

Paul Rich²⁴⁶ has noted that ideas about race²⁴⁷ in South African history are too often exclusively interpreted in the context of the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism and the policies of segregation that evolved from the early 1900s. Rich argues that by ignoring the impact of British racial ideas on the development of segregatory policies in South Africa from the 1900s, the pervasive nature of these ideas has largely been lost. Rich notes that at that time British racial ideas had concentrated rather more on the general issues of social discipline and social control over the

²⁴⁵ Crabbe, D (1912), “Slum Lordism: How the Local Poor Live”, *The Sunday Times*, no date, 1912. Cited in Chisholm (1989), p.118

²⁴⁶ Rich, P (1993), *Hope and Despair: English-Speaking Intellectuals and South African Politics, 1896-1976*, (London, British Academic Press, pp.1-13)

²⁴⁷ Kallaway has noted that there are significant differences in the meanings of race in the South African context. Race was applied at least as much in the context of the rivalry between British imperialism and Afrikaner Nationalism. For an analysis of the various forms of racism which came together to help shape political and educational policies in the area of race relations in South Africa, see Kallaway, P (1993), “Historical discourses, racist mythology and education in twentieth-century South Africa”, in Mangan, JA (ed), *The Imperial Curriculum: Racial Images and Education in the British Colonial Experience*, (London, Routledge, pp.194-202)

‘white’ and ‘african’ workforce, and that these racial ideas had been imbricated within social policy in very complex and subtle ways. This provided a discursive language that was later used to respond to all sorts of social and political problems.

(In relation to the work of Dubow) segregation appears more as an extension of Victorian fears of the ‘dangerous classes’. The ideology of segregation (for Dubow) was constructed to maintain social order as well as social and moral hygiene, which became a powerful metaphorical image in the drive for urban segregation in South Africa in the early twentieth century. Segregation was not simply the atavistic product of a pre-industrial frontier but was part of a wider pattern of modernisation of South African society.²⁴⁸

With regard to the evolution of punishment practices in South Africa at the turn of the twentieth century, it was argued that ‘white deviants’ could be ‘redeemed’ simply by removing them from the social contexts in which they “mingled with non-whites.”²⁴⁹ It was argued that without the ‘infectious’ influence of ‘non-white’ children from the urban slums, ‘poor white’ children would be ‘saved’. This penal sanction of removal was also employed with regard to ‘coloured’ children in the 1940s, but in a significantly ‘adapted’ form. Whereas ‘white’ children could be ‘saved’ if removed from the contaminating influence of ‘non-whites’, it was asserted that ‘coloured’ children could supposedly only be ‘saved’ if removed from their ‘coloured’ neighbourhoods. This development was addressed in Section A.

Also, from the 1940s the openly racial discourse of previous times had given way for far more subtle explanations for criminal behaviour. These explanations relied on the ‘great advances’ made by scientific knowledge by that time. However, this aspect of the punishment system in South Africa that linked ‘racial mixing’ to degeneracy and crime, remained a feature of the system for most of the twentieth century.

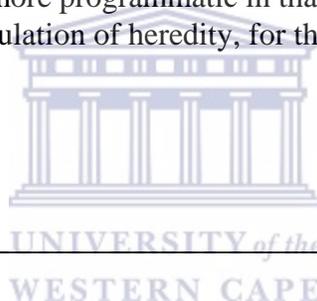
c) Punishment, Science and Health

Saul Dubow has noted that in the case of the link between ‘racial ideology’, poverty and crime in South Africa, the impact (and extent of the use) of words drawn from

²⁴⁸ Rich (1993), p.14

the vocabulary of the biological sciences should not be underestimated. This biological vocabulary was not only routinely applied to society from the late nineteenth century onwards, but with the advent of the Darwinian revolution, it helped to “create the kind of moral universe in which nature reflected society and visa versa.”²⁵⁰ Impregnated with biological metaphors, the language of Social Darwinism²⁵¹ was heavily loaded with terms like ‘adaptation’, ‘segregation’, ‘degeneration’, ‘disease’, ‘hygiene’, ‘fitness’, and ‘hybridisation’ that had the capacity to convey a range of recognisable meanings and connotations.²⁵² Dubow has noted that:

Social Darwinism may be understood as a broad philosophy or ideology that broadly describes social evolution in terms of the ‘laws of natural selection’ and stresses the importance of biological inheritance. This may be seen as a rationalisation of competitive individualism or as a claim for collective social action in the defence of, say, the ‘nation’. Eugenics arises out of this philosophy, but is more programmatic in that it refers to practical strategies, based on the manipulation of heredity, for the realisation of Social Darwinist ends.²⁵³



²⁴⁹ Chisholm (1989), p.116

²⁵⁰ Jones, G (1980), *Social Darwinism and English Thought*, (Brighton, p.147); Cited in Dubow, S (1995), *Illicit Union: Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*, (Johannesburg, Wits University Press, p.9)

²⁵¹ See Dubow (1995), p.120

²⁵² Dubow asserts that the seepage of Social Darwinist ideas into South Africa was at first gradual, derivative and unfocused, making it difficult to date the precise point at which the language of Social Darwinism became identifiably part of political and social discourse. See Dubow (1995), pp.8-9. Bickford-Smith has noted that from the late 1870s dominant English-speaking representations of ‘coloureds’ and ‘Malays’ increasingly evinced the imagery of Social Darwinism. See Bickford-Smith, V (1995), *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press). Van Heyningen has also indicated that an embryonic form of Social Darwinism existed already in the 1870s in Cape Town. See Van Heynigen, EG (1989), “*Public health and Society in Cape Town 1880-1910*”, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished doctoral dissertation, pp 152-3). Dubow asserts however that ‘it seems more likely that it only became widespread in the following two decades, as the doctrine of social imperialism (which was by then meshed with Social Darwinist notions of an ‘imperial race’) came to be forcefully articulated. See Dubow (1995), pp.128-129; See Davin, A (1978), “Imperialism and Motherhood”, *History Workshop*, 5, 1978 (p.18)

²⁵³ Dubow (1995), p.9

In this regard, Maynard Swanson²⁵⁴ has for example argued that the fear of the plague and the language of contamination in cities like Cape Town and Port Elizabeth at the beginning of the twentieth century provided an important part of the rationale for introducing urban segregation.²⁵⁵ The imagery of infectious disease (and the link that was made between the ‘non-white urban presence’ and ‘squalor, disease and crime’) served as a powerful social metaphor in the first decade of the twentieth century. This imagery served to inform and define the significance of ‘race differences’ within South Africa’s future social and political system.²⁵⁶ In relation to punishment practices, this discourse served to link the ‘racial origin’ of ‘non-whites’ to their poverty-stricken and ‘diseased condition’, and to their ‘inherent proneness to commit criminal and deviant acts’.²⁵⁷

d) *Punishment and labour/work preparedness*

It was previously asserted that from the late nineteenth century penal systems had come to focus more strongly on the minds or ‘inner-selves’ of prisoners. It was asserted at that time that prisoners could be ‘rehabilitated’ and ‘reformed’ simply by changing their attitudes to authority in general and to work in particular.²⁵⁸ This assertion is of particular significance here in the light of Van Zyl Smit’s assertion

²⁵⁴ Swanson has argued that the imagery of infectious disease was informed both by British racial attitudes based on issues of ‘contamination’ and South African racial attitudes derived from notions of superiority. See Swanson, M (1977), “The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plaque and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1909”, *Journal of African History*, 18, 3, 1977; Also see Saunders, C (1979), ‘The Creation of Ndabeni’, *Studies in the History of Cape Town, Volume 1*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town Press, p.135)

²⁵⁵ For example, the bubonic plague that struck Cape Town in 1901 was blamed on the ‘bantuspeaking’ population of Cape Town. The Cape Town City Council duly passed numerous health and housing ordinances in an attempt to calm the mounting hysteria at the Cape. Over 7000 ‘bantuspeaking’ ‘non-europeans’ were duly ‘moved’ to the hastily-erected Uitvlugt compound. Thereafter, ‘africans’ at the Cape were subjected to rigid pass law and housing legislation. See Bickford-Smith, V (1995), *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town*, (Johannesburg, Wits University Press, p.71 and p.31)

²⁵⁶ See Thompson, L (1986), *The Political Mythology of Apartheid*, (New Haven and London, Yale University Press) and Chisholm, L (1987), “Crime, Class and Nationalism: The Criminology of Jacob De Villiers Roos, 1869-1918”, *Social Dynamics*, 13 (2), 1987, pp.46-59

²⁵⁷ From the 1920s, prominent South African criminologists like WA Willemse meshed this ‘language’ in complex ways with Afrikaner Nationalist thought. See Willemse, WA (1938), *The Road to the Reformatory*, (Pretoria, National Bureau, pp.93-105)

²⁵⁸ See Fine, W (1980), “The Birth of Bourgeois Punishment”, *Crime and Social Justice*, No.19, Summer 1980, p.23; Also see Ignatieff (1978), p.220 and Rothman (1971), p.295

that “labour programmes ostensibly designed to rehabilitate convicts are still public policy and continue to play a key part in the punishment system of South Africa.”²⁵⁹

Van Zyl Smit asserts that contemporary discourses about punishment continue to assume that by making ‘inmates’ of ‘correctional’ institutions *work*, they would acquire the habits of discipline and work readiness and so cease to be a burden on the state. This ‘common sense’ assumption about the all-pervasive value of work was highlighted in the views expressed by the Commissioner of Prisons of 1979, who wrote:

An important aspect of the treatment of prisoners is the purposeful and meaningful training of each prisoner with a view to his eventual rehabilitation and readjustment to the community upon his release.²⁶⁰

Such an assertion provided policy makers and penal administrators with a complex double bind. On the one hand, it was argued that by providing transgressors of the norms of society with work training and skills, penal policy makers could reduce the recidivism rates of society by allowing them to pursue alternative ‘ways of living’. On the other hand, as noted by Pratt, ‘deviants’ could not be rewarded for their ‘anti-social’ acts by attaining a level of training in prison that they could not get outside prison. Simply put, ‘criminals’ could not be ‘let off the hook’. They had to be punished in ways that disadvantaged them. Pratt asserts for New Zealand that:

(In this system) a man could not be sent to goal with the expectation of coming out a far better and more skilled man than when he went in. Those who were incarcerated could certainly be provided with training for a qualification in how to be a ‘useful citizen’. They could not expect training for a qualification in a skilled job.²⁶¹

This dilemma remained a feature also of the penal system of South Africa for much of the twentieth century.

It has been argued above that penal practice in South Africa was informed not only by the political and social agendas of ‘white’ society after 1910, but also by the

²⁵⁹ Van Zyl Smit (1986), p.146

²⁶⁰ Van Zyl Smit (1986), p.158

ways in which notions of work, poverty and images of disease were interpreted at that time. In Section C it will be argued that the decision to provide ‘correctional’ facilities for ‘coloured’ boys in the 1940s was notably informed by the extent to which notions like work preparedness, welfare relief and social discipline had become enmeshed within notions of punishment by that time. ‘Correctional’ provision at that time was also informed by the extent to which these notions informed other social practices dealing with the needs of the poor.

Category 3: The intellectual ideas that informed penal practice in South Africa

In examining the impact of the intellectual conditions in South Africa that have underpinned the criminal justice system at various points in its history, Van Zyl Smit has identified three key junctures.²⁶² They are:

- a) Legal Reformist Criminology;
- b) Afrikaner Nationalist Criminology;
- c) Critical Criminology.

By 1910 penal policy based on punishment in South Africa had slowly given way to strategies that emphasised ‘rehabilitation’ and ‘surveillance’. These strategies were based on the notions of rationality and scientific thought that generally characterised international debates at that time. Director of Prisons and Secretary for Justice from 1908, Jacob de Villiers Roos described this new ‘movement’ in the following way:

The sinner could be *saved*, the dishonest person *made honest*, the illiterate and mentally deficient trained to *habits of decency* and discipline if removed from conditions conducive to crime to environments where they could, as in a hospital, be *cured* of their crime, and *restored* to social and individual health (my emphases).²⁶³

²⁶¹ Pratt (1992), p.245

²⁶² Van Zyl Smit (1990), p.2; As the third category emerged in the late 1970s, it will not be dealt with here. Also see Van Zyl Smit, D (1989), ‘Adopting and Adapting Criminological Ideas: Criminology and Afrikaner Nationalism in South Africa’, *Contemporary Crises*, 13, 1989, pp.227-251

²⁶³ Transvaal Archives (TA), A739, Vol.11-12, *J.De Villiers Ross Collection*, ‘Modern penology, (no date); Cited in Chisholm (1989), p.97; Also see Chisholm (1989), p.98

Chisholm has noted that in this period “criminality symbolised danger, disorder and sin”. The fight against this ‘chaos’ was then conceived of “as a never-ceasing war conducted by the good citizen against a ‘rushing, roaring tide of criminality’ against which all ‘the countries of the world that pretended to be civilised’ were engaged”:

Metaphors of disease mixed freely with others. Not only did criminals constitute a flood-tide, an army; they were also a ‘social sore on the social body’ that was to be eliminated, and the social body restored to health. Most importantly, criminals were a sign of backwardness, which was symbolic of a past that inhibited progress. If the nation was to be modernised, the primitive and the backward had to be controlled.²⁶⁴

From 1910 it was increasingly asserted by educationalists that the ‘criminally-tainted’ could be ‘saved’ and ‘converted’ into ‘useful citizens’ by subjecting them to education programmes that emphasised the ‘changing of their attitudes, thinking and values’. This focus on *educational intervention* directly informed the transfer of control of industrial schools in 1917 from the Department of Prisons to the Union Department of Education, and likewise the transfer of reformatories in 1934.

Legal Reformist Criminology

Van Zyl Smit has noted that legal reformist criminology was firmly rooted in the period from the reorganisation of the South African state shortly after Union in 1910 till the 1930s, by which time the penal system was firmly established.²⁶⁵ The ideological underpinnings of legal reformism at that time were derived from a doctrine of ‘broad South Africanism’ with significant support for imperial institutions and the development of a modern state system. Van Zyl Smit asserts that:

The broader object of this process had been to create a new South Africanism that would appeal to both Afrikaans- and English speaking whites, and that would get all whites to stand together in the face of a common enemy. The consolidation of penal institutions for a new, criminalised proletariat was combined at this time with the articulation of a pragmatic ideology in which the common interests of all whites were

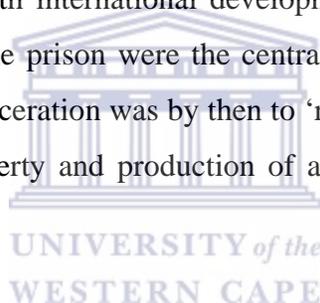
²⁶⁴ Chisholm (1989), p.96

²⁶⁵ Van Zyl Smit (1989), pp.227-228

equated with a commitment to modernisation and efficiency. A constituent of this ideology was the efforts to abolish the remnants of barbaric early punishments, and replace them with the methods of ‘scientific positivism’ that sought to produce a body of statistical material about prisoners and their backgrounds.²⁶⁶

It was for these tasks that Jacob de Villiers Roos was enlisted in 1907. Roos is regarded as the earliest and perhaps most articulate practitioner of legal reformism. Roos was a lawyer by training that at that time had strong links to the new elite that came to power in 1910. As the first Secretary of Justice and Director of Prisons of the Union, Roos was primarily responsible for the consolidation of the South African prison system after 1910.

As a ‘moderniser’ and a ‘reformer’, Roos resolved from 1910 to bring South African criminal justice in line with international developments in the field. According to Roos, incarceration and the prison were the central mechanisms for punishing. As the main objective of incarceration was by then to ‘repress crime’, this was achieved by “the deprivation of liberty and production of a disciplined and orderly regime within the institution.”²⁶⁷



Roos’ notions of ‘reclamation’ and ‘rehabilitation’ went hand in hand at that time with notions of ‘correct classification’ and ‘appropriate training’ for prisoners. Chisholm has noted that Roos’ reforms were also designed at that time to inculcate the *discipline of work* in those who had been processed through the criminal justice system. This was a central tenet of international criminological thought in that period.

As Director of Prisons he finally abolished the treadmill, the stocks and the breaking of stones for native women as a punishment, from our gaols, and generally also humanised prison treatment, by introducing Prison Boards for keeping in touch with the convict, also educative forces and ‘reclassification’ through the Prisoners’ Aid Association (later known as NICRO) when on release the prisoner has to join society again. He also extended the reformatory system

²⁶⁶ Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.228

²⁶⁷ Chisholm (1989), p.93

for juveniles and juvenile adults, introduced road camps outside prison for pass boys, and prison farms for open air work as a stepping-stone to freedom. He was also responsible under the Minister for the introduction of Government Industrial Schools.²⁶⁸

While Roos's contribution to the field of criminality provided the roots of the pro-state, consensus model of crime that dominates South African criminology till the end of the twentieth century (and perhaps to this day),²⁶⁹ he was less interested in the causes of crime than in their social dimensions and their solution. For Roos, the modernising and capitalising colonial state simply required at that time that the 'primitive' and 'backward' had to be controlled. De Villiers Roos conceived of the problem in two ways.

Firstly, he envisaged a positivist method that sought to employ the discourse of 'science' to study the criminal. Roos claimed at the time that "knowledge of crime and the criminal would define and make visible that section of the population, 'the backward', which needed to be brought within the ambit of the law".²⁷⁰

Statistics, maps and charts all assisted in asserting the 'scientific' aspect of the enterprise and of providing knowledge of crime in the Union. Through this method of demarcating every region to identify its backwardness, classify its crime and assess its degree of threat, Roos sought to map the terrain of terror, the mapping itself contributing to the neutralisation of the danger. Roos kept a chart in his office "as one keeps a temperature chart to show the rise and fall of a fever patient in a hospital; (so) my chart shows the rise and fall of this fever of criminality in the Transvaal."²⁷¹

In this regard, the portrayal of the 'non-white' population as 'backward' was an intrinsic aspect of the intellectual underpinnings for legal reformism. The *Lansdown Commission Report of 1947* noted that:

If ultimately (the educated Native) can find no suitable outlet for his activities, he frequently suffers from a bitterness and a frustration that

²⁶⁸ Transvaal Archive Depot (TAD), A739, *Jacob de Villiers Roos Collection, Vol.16*, 'Jacob de Villiers Roos, B.A.LLB -Controller and Auditor-General'; Cited in Chisholm (1989), p.93

²⁶⁹ Chisholm (1989), p.95

²⁷⁰ Chisholm (1989), p.96

²⁷¹ Cape Archives (CA), A2380, *NICRO Collection*, 'Address given by De Villiers Roos to the Pretoria branch of the South African Prisoners' Aid Association (SAPAA), Minutes of Meetings of 1911'. Cited by Chisholm, (1989), pp.96-97

engender in him feelings of racial animosity. Means must be found to ensure that the Natives in town become decent members of society, and obey European standards of morality in order to lessen crime.²⁷²

Referring to Roos's Annual Report for 1910, a newspaper editor noted in 1911 that Roos was so "largely concerned with the Natives that a stranger might be pardoned for coming to the conclusion that if there were no Natives there would be no crime in South Africa."²⁷³ This conflation of the danger of the criminal with the danger of 'natives' was a significant aspect of the 'consensus' approach of legal reformism at that time. It served to rally 'white' South Africans in a common and collective cause against the criminal, who threatened to 'destroy' "all that had been achieved until then". At that time, the discourse of the criminal could easily have been mistaken for the discourse of the 'native problem.'²⁷⁴

Secondly, Roos asserted that elements of 'criminally-tainted whites' among the 'white' working class needed to be separated from the 'respectable' and 'non-criminal' 'white' population. He argued that these problems posed by the 'poor white' question could best be resolved at that time by institutionalisation. Roos foresaw the institution as 'one great reforming school',²⁷⁵ where, through its regime of work, religion and discipline, it would remedy the defects produced by society. By placing the rehabilitation of the 'offender' at the heart of penal reform, institutionalisation invariably came to be regarded as the central means of 'redeeming' the 'bad elements of the 'white' population. The notion of reclaiming 'white' children in danger of 'falling into crime' was clearly founded at that time on the belief that 'white' individuals could be saved from 'corruption'. By being removed from the corrupting influence of modern city life and 'racial mixing' with 'non-whites', these 'white' children were provided with training that it was hoped would place them on 'a higher economic plane' and ensure that they did not return to the slums. At that time the notion of removal was an international phenomenon,

²⁷² Union of South Africa (1947), *The Report of the Lansdown Commission of 1947*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, pp.6-14). Cited by Van Zyl Smit (1990), p.3

²⁷³ *South Africa, 18 November 1911*; Cited in Chisholm (1989), p.97

²⁷⁴ Chisholm (1989), p.97

but was ‘adapted’ in the South African context to emphasise ‘removal from racial mixing’.²⁷⁶

This element of legal reformism also laid the basis whereby social institutions were provided only for ‘white’ children until 1948. This development from the 1940s was informed by the complex ways in which ideas underpinning legal reformism had been taken up by Afrikaner Nationalist criminology from the 1920s.

Afrikaner Nationalist Criminology

It was noted earlier that the ideological home of legal reformism was based on the desire to build a consensual society of Afrikaner and English South Africans that was committed to the modernisation of the state and society. This conception of society was increasingly challenged from the 1920s onwards by an emerging Afrikaner Nationalism, which fed off the social and economic impoverishment of the ‘afrikaner’ people.²⁷⁷ It is significant that these efforts to address the ‘poor white’ problem emerged at a time of the economic depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s, and that explanations and solutions to crime and delinquency were taken up and ‘adapted’ within the context of these new political re-alignments. Crime and delinquency from the 1930s became the central metaphor through which wider concerns and social policy were explored.

The academic criminology of Afrikaner nationalism did not however represent as clear a break as might be thought. There were many notions espoused by this Afrikaner Nationalist tradition that were neither new nor original. Social workers, whether English or Afrikaans-speaking, had always associated delinquency with poverty. Also, the conception of delinquency had since the turn of the century

²⁷⁵ Chisholm (1989), p.98

²⁷⁶ See Dubow (1995), pp.8-15

²⁷⁷ Van Zyl Smit has asserted that poverty “was basically confined to one section of the white population, whose lack of proficiency in English was often seen as a barrier to economic success. Ethnic mobilisers were used at the time to hold British imperialism responsible for the condition of the Afrikaner people”. See Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.228

always been racialised. As noted earlier, the notion that ‘racial mixing’ was the cause of crime had been around at least since the early 1900s. More importantly, however, as Van Zyl Smit observes, the racist discourse which formed part of academic criminology in the first three decades of this century was not only an intrinsic part of intellectual ‘explanations’ of ‘white’ South Africans of all political persuasions. It was also a significant aspect of criminological theories *in intellectual circles all over the world*. “It was part and parcel of the popularization of social theories that attributed crime to social rather than individual pathologies.”²⁷⁸

What was different then about Afrikaner Nationalist criminology? Firstly, Afrikaner Nationalists asserted from the 1930s that the solution to the problem of crime and deviance in South Africa was the strict segregation of the races. It was the first time in South Africa that it was suggested that a political solution was also the criminological ‘solution’. Afrikaner criminologists asserted that ‘racial mixing’ not only caused crime, but also led to the moral, social and cultural collapse of ‘racial communities’. The notion of ‘contamination’ was articulated then as the need to separate the ‘races’.

Secondly, Afrikaner Nationalists focused exclusively on the existence of criminality amongst ‘poor whites’ from the mid-1920s, whose conduct was their primary concern. They were particularly concerned about providing explanations for ‘white’ criminality at that time. Gone was the previous preoccupation with poverty. Afrikaner Nationalists concentrated instead on what they described as ‘organic differences’ between the ‘non-white’ races and the ‘white’ population. It was asserted that ‘non-whites’ committed particular types of offences “associated with imbeciles”, which could only be explained away by their lack of intelligence. Again, this was not a new ‘assertion’ in South Africa. However, in this conception, “you were dealing with ‘organic conditions’, with (‘non-white’) people who do not calculate or think but act spontaneously in response to their immediate emotions”.²⁷⁹ In addition, “these (‘non-white’) people found western justice foreign”. One of the

²⁷⁸ Van Zyl Smit (1990), p.5

foremost Afrikaner criminologists, WA Willemse, of that period asserted in 1942 that:

The fact remains that young non-whites now gamble on the streets, idle in the locations and are becoming a terrible crime burden for the state if one doesn't in some or other way train or treat them. Personally, I would act drastically against the layabouts amongst the non-whites – particularly in our century of concentration camps, for science has shown us that intellectually and emotionally, non-whites differ from us whites.²⁸⁰

In the writings of the 1940s a key aspect of Afrikaner Nationalist criminology was the notion that crime control policies (based on the science of criminology) required the strict separation of the 'races', "not only to protect 'whites', but also to protect the individual races against themselves". Van Zyl Smit notes that:

Not only should they be segregated to protect whites from them, but they should also be encouraged to form their own organic whole so that inter-group deviance could be curtailed.²⁸¹

Afrikaner Nationalists argued from the 1940s that the "laissez-faire segregation that had been Union Government policy until then needed to be replaced by a systematic, 'scientific' policy of apartheid."²⁸² These ideas and processes impacted in significant ways on the provision of 'correctional' institutions for 'coloured' children thereafter. Particular notions of 'coloured' crime had by then become enmeshed within penal thought and practice.

- 1) The belief that the 'coloured' people were inherently 'criminogenic' and that their organic make-up explained their 'propensity to commit anti-social acts', was a crucial development in that period;
- 2) It was asserted that the needs of 'coloured' children needed to be addressed as part of a policy that emphasised the separation of the 'races'. In this regard, 'coloured' people also needed to become involved in the 'solution' of crime among 'their community';
- 3) It was also argued that the problems presented by 'coloured deviants' could best be addressed in large 'concentration-camp' institutions that

²⁷⁹ Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.240

²⁸⁰ Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.241. For more information on Willemse and Geoff Cronje, see Van Zyl Smit (1989), pp.229-238

²⁸¹ Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.241

²⁸² Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.241

emphasised discipline and provided facilities to teach ‘coloureds’ the ‘habits of work’.²⁸³

After 1948, with the election of an overtly Afrikaner Nationalist government, these ideas and processes became entrenched as state policy. From the 1950s it was increasingly asserted that ‘white’ and ‘non-white’ criminality could simply not be studied together. In his doctoral dissertation under Cronje at the University of Pretoria (later published as a book), HJ Venter claimed that:

The white and non-white do not only form two separate racial groups, but also as far as crime is concerned they cannot, because of their different levels of civilisation and development as well as because of the differences in their personal, social, economic, cultural and other circumstances, be put on a comparable and certainly not on the same basis. Invariably, the trek of the native to the city, the detribalisation and westernisation of the non-white, bring about that not only has he become a danger to himself (and thus needs to be protected), but also and pre-eminently a threat to the social and economic life of white South Africa. Because of the differences non-whites must be either kept from the city or taught how to survive separately in the city.²⁸⁴

Given the prominence of Geoff Cronje and WA Willemse in the Afrikaner Nationalist writings of that period, as well as their influence on the overall literature, a short discussion of their lives is provided to indicate the nature of their impact on penal reform in South Africa.²⁸⁵ It is significant that that by the 1940s the various ways in which ‘reformers’ tried to blend international developments with the specifics of the South African situation provided contemporary penal practice with a particular legacy.

The work and lives of Willemse and Cronje

²⁸³ Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.243; See also Section A, in particular the assertions made by the Wilcocks Commission of 1937.

²⁸⁴ Venter, HJ (1954), *Residivisme- ‘n Vergelykende Kriminologiese ondersoek onder 200 residiviste en 199 eerste-oortreders*, (Cape Town, HAUM, p.37 and p.42)

²⁸⁵ Dubow has noted that the criminological school developed by Willemse and Cronje at Pretoria University from the 1930s was the pioneer of academic criminology from that time. Dubow asserted that with “the ascendancy of Afrikaner power in the years after 1948, it came to exert a significant influence on policing and the penal establishment as a whole. At least until the 1970s it reproduced itself in an unchanged form as received knowledge”. See Dubow (1995), p.157

Dirk Van Zyl Smit has observed that the work of both WA Willemse²⁸⁶ and Geoff Cronje drew much of its emphasis from the academic criminology that developed in Europe²⁸⁷ during the 1930s. Both Willemse and Cronje, unlike their earlier criminologists who derived much of their ‘theory’ in the course of their work, took highly academic routes in their development as two of the major criminological figures in South Africa in the 1930s. After studying at various universities in Germany, Willemse linked up with Cronje at the University of Pretoria in 1934 when he accepted the post of lecturer in psychology. Cronje had also studied in Europe (Amsterdam), completing doctorates in sociology and criminology, before returning to South Africa to take up the post of head of the Department of Sociology and Social Work at the University of Pretoria in 1933. Cronje became the first Professor of Sociology and Social Work at that University, at the age of 28 years, in 1936. He remained in that position till he retired in the 1970s.

Before embarking on his European sojourn, Willemse had completed a doctorate in Psychology at the University of Pretoria in 1929, in which he set out to show *Constitutional-types*²⁸⁸ in *Delinquency: Practical Applications and Bio-Physiological Foundations of Kretschmer's Types*. Willemse's thesis was well received by some German academics at a time when the theory of constitutional types was being applied to campaigns against racial mixing in that country. After studying at numerous institutions in Germany (Bonn, Leipzig, Berlin and Vienna),

²⁸⁶ W.A. Willemse was born in 1904 to Dutch parents living in the Warden district of the Orange Free State. He went to school in various country towns, and worked as a bank clerk before embarking on an academic career. He died prematurely in a car accident in 1945. For more biographical detail, see Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.229-232; Dubow (1995), pp.157-159; and Chisholm (1989), pp.300-311

²⁸⁷ Dubow has noted that there were many attempts in the late nineteenth century, in the field of criminology in Europe and the United States, to link criminality with particular physical types. The work of Lombroso in particular is credited with the stimulation of research into the constitutional nature of the ‘criminal classes’ and the biological nature of deviancy. Dubow contends that unlike in South Africa, the development of categories of mental deficiency, ‘feeble-mindedness’, criminality, deviance and immorality in Europe, were more readily applied to questions of social class and gender than to race. “This was the case notwithstanding the implicit racial analogies in the construction of a criminological discourse”. See Dubow (1995), pp.154-160

²⁸⁸ In his book, *Constitutional-types in Delinquency*, Willemse sought to identify certain types amongst boys in reformatories and then linked these to particular temperaments. His research in Germany also concentrated on institutionalised boys, whereby pre-identified psychopaths and epileptics were

he was awarded a second doctorate in 1934 by the University of Bonn. Even though his work at the time was highly technical in nature, it demonstrated an interest in hereditarian theories about crime. Willemse set out to develop typologies that embraced both body types and personality types.

For Willemse, it was not enough to explain criminality in terms of unitary biological or psychological type; instead the diversity of criminal behaviour had to be explained in terms of a complexity of body and character types.²⁸⁹

Willemse regarded criminology as an intellectual- prism through which he could observe the pathology of society, and so effect its transformation. He regarded the field of criminology as a crucial metaphor and indicator of the social health of the country. Yet, within Willemse's hereditarian theory of crime and deviance, he also conceded the impact of environmental agencies (as previously argued by people like De Villiers Roos). This recognition served to generate a convenient intellectual dualism for him, where poor Afrikaners were portrayed as the victims of an unjust social and political system, while the social circumstances of poor 'non-whites' were ascribed to their inherent cultural and biological inferiority.

For Willemse, the nature of 'non-white' criminality epitomised the wider threat to social order posed by 'non-whites'. Within the terms of his circular logic, 'racial' inferiority was identified as the cause of 'non-white' criminality, and the nature of 'non-white' criminality was in turn offered as proof of their inferiority.²⁹⁰

Nevertheless, Willemse was not content to explain 'non-white' criminality simply in terms of intellectual inferiority. Rather, he claimed that it was the result of deeper, 'organic' differences. In this scenario then, 'non-white' deviance reflected a deep social pathology, in which 'non-white' criminality was a symptom of a lack of an organic community and social solidarity.

subjected to tests to determine how they coped with fear in conflict situations. See Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.231

²⁸⁹ Dubow (1995), p.157-158

²⁹⁰ Dubow (1995), pp.158-160

By closely articulating his analysis of delinquency within the bounds of the interests and preoccupations of Afrikaner nationalism, Willemse produced one of the more stringent and coherent analyses of delinquency than had previously been produced in South Africa. Built on the foundations of Social Darwinism of earlier times, the work of Willemse reflected the growing perception among Afrikaner nationalists that the 'non-white' was both a 'symptom' and 'a 'cause' of the 'sociopathology' that threatened the Afrikaner *volk* at that time.²⁹¹

Like Willemse, Geoff Cronje²⁹² also grew up and received his schooling in a rural area. Van Zyl Smit notes that Cronje was attracted to Afrikaner nationalism from an early age and initially studied theology at the University of Stellenbosch at a time when the University was already the 'centre of Afrikaner nationalism',²⁹³. When Cronje sought to further his studies in Europe, his interest in nationalism had already been nurtured under prominent Afrikaner Nationalists. Cronje studied criminology and sociology under a Professor WA Bonger (ironically, a renowned marxist) at the University of Amsterdam where he was conferred with two doctorates in 1933. In Europe, Cronje concentrated his attention on the European nationalist movements of the 1930s.²⁹⁴ JM Coetzee has noted that Cronje returned from Europe full of enthusiasm for the goals and methods of parties of the European Right.²⁹⁵ Coetzee asserted that Cronje's involvement in the founding of the Afrikaanse Nasionale Studentebond was informed by his links to the Afrikaner Broederbond, in which he became a "leading figure in its policy-forming deliberations". As a young lecturer Cronje retained his links with the Afrikaner nationalist student movement, acting as

²⁹¹ Dubow (1995), p.158

²⁹² Cronje was born in 1907, also in the Cape Province

²⁹³ At the University of Stellenbosch, Cronje became close and lifelong friends with H.F.Verwoerd. See Coetzee, JM (1991), 'The Mind of Apartheid: Geoffrey Cronje (1907-)', *Social Dynamics*, 17, 1, pp.1-35

²⁹⁴ See Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.230

²⁹⁵ Coetzee (1991), p.3; Jonathan Hyslop wrote an article in 1993 that sought to respond directly to some of Coetzee's assertions made in his 1991 article. See Hyslop, J (1993), 'The Representation of White Working Class Women in the Construction of a Reactionary Populist Movement: 'Purified' Afrikaner Nationalist Agitation for Legislation against 'Mixed' Marriages 1934-1939', *African Studies Seminar Paper Series, No.340, 24 May, 1993, pp.1-27*, (Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand)

editor of its mouthpiece, the journal *Wapenskou*, from 1935-37. In this capacity he produced numerous leading articles supporting the Afrikaner nationalist cause. Also, his political involvement extended beyond university walls. In 1934, he attended the National Volkskongres that was held to discuss *the Report of the Carnegie Commission on Poor Whites*. In the decades thereafter, Cronje came to play a dominant role in the various Union Government and Republic of South Africa Commissions that were formed to investigate the needs of society at various times. Of particular significance to this study, Cronje served on both the Wilcocks Commission of 1937, as well as the Theron Commission of 1964 (both investigations focused on the social conditions of the 'coloured' population of South Africa).

The impact of the work of both Willemse and Cronje must not be underestimated. JM Coetzee has referred to Cronje as “an influential figure in radical Afrikaner Nationalist circles in the 1940s and a seminal contributor to the theory of apartheid.”²⁹⁶ Unlike Coetzee who claimed that apartheid was “a moment of irrational madness”, it is argued here that the most significant contribution of the two academics was the way in which both men blended international ‘scientific thought’, elements of European Nationalism and Fascism, and the particular needs of the ‘afrikaner’ in South Africa when formulating their ideas.

Conclusion

It has been argued that a complex mesh of varying and contradictory ideas and practices informed the development of penal practice or penalty in South Africa. These ideas and processes in various ways shaped the particular institutions, practices and sanctions that were adopted in South Africa during the twentieth century. In this regard, many international ideas on penal practice merged with local ideas that had been developed in contradictory and ambiguous ways. This served to

²⁹⁶ Coetzee, JM (1991), ‘The Mind of Apartheid: Geoffrey Cronje (1907-)’, *Social Dynamics*, Volume 17, No.1, p.1

inform the particular ways in which the needs of children ‘in need of care’ were addressed in South Africa during the twentieth century.

For example, by focusing on the individual psyche and the particularity of individual persons, penal practice legislation by the 1940s had come to highlight the particular social conditions of the various ‘races’. In this regard, the analysis of the ‘social conditions’ of family members of a ‘coloured’ child institutionalised in state facilities after 1948 was used to ‘determine’ the future of the relevant child. In that period, the needs of ‘coloured’ children were ‘predicted’ via an ‘estimation’ of what could be expected of the child in the future. The social condition of the child’s family was not analysed and judged solely to understand the various needs of the child, but was used as an indicator of possible ‘success’ of state programmes. ‘Conditions’ like the ‘undesirable housing environments’ of the ‘coloured’ population at that time, the previous ‘convictions’ of any one parent, the nature of the parental bond (if a child’s parents were married), the economic level of the family, whether both parents worked or were willing to work, and even whether the parents of a ‘coloured’ child ‘got along’, were derived from a particular knowledge-base of the various ‘races’ that had been developed in South Africa by that time. It is argued that the way in which ideas about indigency, work preparedness, and ‘race deterioration’ were fused with notions of punishment in the South African context, informed the type of state care that was provided for ‘coloured’ boys after 1948.

Chapter 2:
**The Emergence of
Industrial Schools in
South Africa. The
Children's Act and the
Union Education
Department**

Introduction

In Section A it was noted that the Union Education Department played a significant role in the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in 1948. It was noted that the establishment of a school of industries for ‘coloured’ boys was part of the Union Education Department’s programme of expansion in the period after 1945.

This chapter serves to provide the context for this post-Second World War development. The chapter focuses on the emergence of industrial schools in South Africa from the 1890s and examines the links between the Children’s Protection Act of 1913 (amended in 1937) and the Union Education Department. It is argued that the development of a particular type of relationship from the 1920s between the Union Education Department and children deemed to be ‘in need of care’ informed the way in which the needs of these children were addressed thereafter.

The Genesis of Industrial Schools

According to W Clarke Hall,²⁹⁷ the idea of industrial schools originated in Scotland. The first industrial school was established in Aberdeen in 1850 for both destitute and delinquent children. The school received legal recognition in 1854 under the Scottish Industrial School Act. In his 1941 doctoral thesis, JA Grobler²⁹⁸ asserted that the first English Industrial School Act of 1857 was probably based more on the success of the Scottish experiment than on the influence of the Ragged Schools movement in England at that time.²⁹⁹ LW Fox has noted that the reformatories and industrial schools, “which have come to have such an honourable place in the history of our penal system,”³⁰⁰ developed in England in the mid-nineteenth century.

²⁹⁷ Clarke Hall, W (1917), *The State and the Child*, (London, Headley Bros.Publishers Ltd, p.58)

²⁹⁸ Grobler, JA (1941), *Juvenile Delinquency in South Africa*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished doctoral thesis, p.110)

²⁹⁹ Grobler has noted that John Pounds, a Portsmouth shoemaker, was the originator of the first Ragged School. In 1818, Pounds gathered together some of the poorest children in Portsmouth and taught them cooking, cobbling and the ABC. Grobler asserts however that although the Ragged Schools are sometimes regarded as one of the parents of industrial schools in England, the first English Industrial School Act of 1857 (amended in 1866, 1908 and 1933) was probably influenced much more by the success of the Scottish Industrial School. See Grobler (1941), p.110

³⁰⁰ Fox, LW (1952), *The English Prison and Borstal Systems*, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, p.327)

Fox asserted that industrial schools set out to be ‘preventative’ rather than ‘corrective’, and were intended to provide training in decent conditions for “the lost children of the industrial age”³⁰¹ in the hope of stopping them from being recruited into the ranks of criminals. This suggests that when industrial schools were first brought into the English legal ambit by the Act of 1857, they were intended as training schools for children under 14 years old, for care or protection cases, and included those children deemed beyond the control of their parents. In England, the Act 20 & 21, Vict.c.48 of 1857 determined that:

Vagrant children, when found and if their parents or guardians could not at once also be found, could be sent to an industrial school for a week. Then the court could discharge the child or could, on *conviction* of the child, hand him over to his parents or guardians, on their giving written assurance to be responsible for the child’s good behaviour for anything up to twelve months. In default of this, the child could be sent to an industrial school for such period as the court might think necessary for his education. No child was to be held after he became 15. The law was amended in 1861, which extended the scope of industrial schools. The following categories of children were laid down as eligible for industrial school training:

- a) Any child apparently under the age of 14 found begging or receiving alms;
- b) Any child apparently under the age of 14 found wandering and not having any home or visible means of support or in company of reputed thieves;
- c) Any child apparently under the age of 12 that, having committed an offence punishable by imprisonment or less, ought, nevertheless, to be sent to an Industrial School;
- d) Any child under the age of 14 whose parents declared him to be beyond their control.³⁰²

It is significant that the emergence of reformatory-like industrial school provision for young juvenile delinquents, those deemed to be on ‘the verge of becoming delinquent’, as well as for destitute children and those perceived to live under undesirable conditions, occurred at a time of substantial social change in England, which was linked to the effects of the industrial revolution.³⁰³ The provision of

³⁰¹ Fox (1952), p.327

³⁰² All these provisions were consolidated in the Act of 1866, which also consolidated the Scottish and English Acts”. See Hinde, RSE (1951), *The British Penal System, 1773-1950*, (London, Gerald Duckworth & Co Ltd, p.104

³⁰³ Hall (1917), p.60

industrial schools in South Africa for the category of children described above took root some 50 years later, under somewhat different circumstances.

Industrial schools in South Africa

Chisholm has argued that the early history of industrial education³⁰⁴ in South Africa can be linked to the differential impact of a changing agrarian economy during the nineteenth century in relation to an 'african' peasantry and low-skilled 'europeans'.³⁰⁵ She noted that the earliest traces of vocational education, and thus industrial schools, were found in the mission schools of the Cape Colony, which provided facilities for 'native' children as far back as 1855. In that year the then Governor, Sir George Grey, secured a large sum of money from the Imperial Government for the training of 'non-europeans' in trades and agriculture.³⁰⁶ This was followed, in 1861, by the attachment of industrial departments to certain mission schools that provided predominantly for children deemed to be 'coloured'. Only in 1873 did the Colonial Government attempt to encourage the industrial training of 'european' youth resident in district boarding schools and boarding departments connected with undenominational schools.³⁰⁷

Industrial schools and Union

³⁰⁴ The De Villiers Commission noted in 1948 that the origin of industrial education in South Africa was quite different from technical education. It was asserted that the origin of technical education (and technical colleges after 1902) lay in the "growing needs of railways, mining and industries at that time, which created an increasing demand for trained and skilled artisans. This led to the establishment of evening or continuation classes for apprentices in technical subjects". See Union of South Africa (1948), *The Report of the (De Villiers) Commission on Technical and Vocational Education of 1948*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, pp.5-7)

³⁰⁵ Chisholm (1989), p.55

³⁰⁶ See Bundy, C (1988), *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry*, (Cape Town, David Philip: 2nd edition, first printed in 1979). Malherbe has also noted that when industrial education was first provided in South Africa, that it was provided for 'non-europeans'. See Malherbe, EG (1977), *Education in South Africa, Volume II: 1923-1975*, (Cape Town, Juta & Co). For more information on this period, see Marks, S (1970), *The Reluctant Rebellion: the 1906-7 disturbances in Natal*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, p.56), and Kallway, P (1992), 'Colonial Education in Natal: the Zwaartkop Government Native School - 1888-1892', *Perspectives in Education, Vol.10, no.2, 1991-1992, p.18*

³⁰⁷ For a summary of the first vocational schools in South Africa, see De Villiers Commission (1948), chapter II

This latter trend was reflected in the approach taken by the Dutch Reformed Church and the Colonial Government to schooling from the 1890s. Industrial education was thereafter increasingly explored as a means to alleviate ‘white’ poverty, particularly in the rural areas.³⁰⁸ This was particularly evident in the establishment of so-called ‘poor schools’ by the Cape government in 1893, when it was decided to make special provision for the education of the poor and neglected ‘European’ child by firstly “establishing so-called ‘poor schools’ in which manual instruction took precedence over cultural subjects” and then making a start with the “establishment of industrial schools for the training of indigent and neglected White children via grants similar to those made hitherto to Native industrial institutions.”³⁰⁹ The Dutch Reformed Church took the lead in this regard by establishing the first industrial school³¹⁰ in South Africa in April 1895.³¹¹ By 1902 there were nine state-aided industrial schools in the Cape Colony. Later on, as seen in Ordinance 11 of 1917, provision was also made for the establishment of hostels for indigent ‘white’ children at ordinary schools. In 1919 an ordinance was passed to create single-teacher industrial schools at such centres.³¹²

Similar provision for ‘Europeans’ in Natal was not provided until 1914. In that year an agricultural training school was established at Weston, near Mooi River, which sought to train farm foremen³¹³. It was the only (state-aided) vocational education institution in Natal at the time and the School Attendance Amendment Ordinance of 1916 in Natal ensured that admission was confined to children of indigent ‘white’ parents. When the agricultural school was transferred to the Union Education Department in 1925, up to 90% of the pupils attending the school were indigent.

³⁰⁸ Chisholm (1989), p.56

³⁰⁹ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.5.

³¹⁰ The Uitenhage Industrial School was the pioneer of several similar institutions for boys and of housecraft schools for girls. These schools were not government schools, but were government-aided.

³¹¹ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.5

³¹² De Villiers Commission (1948) p.6; A Report by the Union Education Department noted that these single teacher institutions had largely been abolished by 1926. See also Union Of South Africa (1926), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1926*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.3)

³¹³ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.6

The first 'industrial school' in the Free State Republic was established in Bloemfontein in 1898,³¹⁴ which sought to address the needs of children of very poor 'white' parents. Owing to the South African War it was closed in 1899 and only re-opened in 1907. The first state-aided industrial school established in the Transvaal was at Potchefstroom in 1905. This made provision for both boys and girls and was opened principally for children in orphanages at Potchefstroom, Irene and Pietersburg. These orphanages had been established after the war in 1902.

Industrial education also had its urban and industrial precedents before the South African War of 1899-1902. On the Rand, the response to a demonstration-march by Johannesburg's 'white' unemployed on 14 August 1897 served to shape the subsequent policies of the Kruger Government on matters relating to the social relief of the 'white' indigent. One of the consequences of the march was the establishment of a scheme that would provide training for 'afrikaner' youths in Johannesburg in an industrial school.³¹⁵

The emergence of industrial school provision in South Africa from the 1890s onwards was thus essentially linked to the provision of different kinds of vocational institutions for 'poor whites'³¹⁶ in both urban and rural areas:

It is evident (from the foregoing account) that vocational education in all the Provinces until 1925 had its origin largely in the depressed economic conditions and poverty of a large section of the European population. Its object was the social rehabilitation of the poor white youth of the country, the majority of whom left school at the end, and many even before the end, of the primary school, ill-equipped for life. The industrial schools were not directly connected with the industries and the instructors, with some

³¹⁴ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.7

³¹⁵ Van Onselen, C (1982), 'The Main Reef Road into the Working Class: Proletarianisation, Unemployment and Class Consciousness amongst Johannesburg's Afrikaner Poor, 1890-1914' in *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914, II: New Nineveh* (Johannesburg, 1982, p.130)

³¹⁶ Bill Freund has taken issue with simplistic use of the term 'poor white'. He has noted that the term is not a natural one. Given its social and ideological construction, 'poor whites' is a very elusive term. See Freund, B (1992), 'Introduction: The Poor Whites: a social force and a social problem in South African history', in Morrell, R (ed), *White but Poor: Essays on the History of Poor Whites in Southern Africa 1880-1940*, (Pretoria, University of South Africa, p.xiii)

exceptions, were not qualified artisans; their products were therefore seldom better than handymen.³¹⁷

It was only after the South African War (1899-1902) that industrial schools resembling reformatories as described in relation to England in the 1850s, developed. In the period of reconstruction after the war, Lord Milner³¹⁸ initiated the establishment of these reform-like schools based on those that had been established in England in the earlier period. He envisaged that the 'new' industrial schools would serve not only children of the white 'indigent', but also those 'white' children considered destitute, neglected and 'likely to fall into crime' by reason of their association with criminals and prostitutes in the urban slums. Milner conceived of these industrial schools as "performing a distinctly penal function, and envisaged that the institutions would serve as a halfway house between the school and the reformatory".³¹⁹

The conditions responsible for the subtle transformation of these schools in that period emerged in the context of the establishment of the new modern state after the South African War, and as a result of the effects of the mining revolution on the Witwatersrand. As noted in Section B, Chapter 1, the structural changes in the economy and society in general from the 1880s brought into being a new class of impoverished 'whites' and urbanised 'non-whites'. Vagrancy, begging and criminal activities in urban areas in this period became the shared fate of 'white' and 'non-white', juvenile and adult.

The social consequences of the dispossession and dislocation of people from rural to urban areas ensured that a range of new social alternatives began to be explored. The well-documented 'push' by the mining sector at that time for the cheap and

³¹⁷ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.7

³¹⁸ Marks, S and Trapido, S (1981), 'Lord Milner and the Making of the South African State', article on Lord Milner and the making of the South African state. See Marks & Trapido (1981), p.54

³¹⁹ Simons, H (1931), "*Crime and punishment with reference to the Native population of South Africa*", (Pretoria, University of South Africa: unpublished Masters dissertation, p.146). Cited in Chisholm (1989), p.58

efficient control of the 'native' migrant labour force, as well as the stabilisation of the 'white', and potentially 'dangerous',³²⁰ working classes in urban areas served to shape the ways in which many of these alternatives were explored.³²¹ The institutionalisation of juvenile offenders after 1910 can thus be seen as a key by-product of the transition to industrial capitalism. Social, educational and welfare measures were tabled, which envisaged particular functions for the various institutions: industrial schools and hostels for the training and stabilisation of the children of the unskilled 'white' working class, and reformatories for those 'white' children who persisted in engaging in 'criminal activity'.

The ideas of British rulers at that time were drawn from experiences in the United Kingdom of class militancy, and of the expansion internationally of the Social Darwinist ideas of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These ideas were adapted in South Africa to also address the issues of 'race' and the nature of the colonial subject. At that time, segregatory policies in South Africa were increasingly infused into programmes that sought to respond to the social problems brought on by rapid industrialisation. It was argued at the time that such programmes required the simultaneous reform of the educational system. Educational, social and penal reconstruction was regarded as intrinsic aspects of the rational re-organisation of society along 'modern lines'. This was a fundamental part of the legacy of the Enlightenment period. It was asserted then that a network of institutions needed to be established to 'contain' some of the social effects of industrialisation and to provide the conditions for social reconstruction. More specifically, the social dislocation wrought by the development of gold mining and the South African War respectively had thrown into sharp relief the whole question of how best to respond to the reproduction and control of the urban 'white' working class, as well as

³²⁰ The notion of a potentially 'dangerous white working class' was derived from developments in metropolitan Britain at that time. Also see Parsons, N (1993), *A New History of Southern Africa*, (London, Macmillan: 2nd Edition, pp.230-240) and the Reader's Digest (1994), *Illustrated History of South Africa: The Real Story*, (Cape Town, The Reader's Digest Association Limited: 3rd Edition, pp.304-312)

³²¹ For a brief summary of developments in this period, see the Reader's Digest (1994), pp.304-358

addressing their social, educational and economic needs, at that time. Chisholm has noted that:

Social, educational and penal institutions were created in this period to transform older, pre-industrial attitudes and values, to absorb and mute rising social and cultural conflicts, and morally educate criminal youth, while at the same time creating broad conditions for a modern education system.³²²

By that time, education had increasingly come to be regarded as an important rehabilitative mechanism in the retraining of 'wayward youth'. Grobler has noted that "vocational training as was taught as an educational subject in South Africa was by then regarded as a means not only to form character but also to prepare the child to make a living". He noted that while vocational training did not pretend to comprehensively teach a child a proper trade, choosing instead to focus "on turning 'ignorant' but teachable youths into 'industrious' fellows", at that time the training that was offered did provide work opportunities for many 'poor white' youths.³²³ Furthermore, Grobler has asserted that the debate about the "educational value of the trades, and its value in the rehabilitation and re-education of delinquent youth,"³²⁴ has too often been presented as the sole purpose of trade training at that time. In that period the debates about the provision of trade training were also fundamentally connected to the debates about 'training for the exercises of practical life' as posited by various theorists from people like Maria Montessori to John Dewey. Grobler has noted that 'the whole idea of providing trade training for delinquent youths' was only fully appreciated when the Union Education Department took over the administration of industrial schools in 1917. Thereafter the Union Education Department sought to provide 'white' children with 'vocational training along the most modern lines'.³²⁵

The response by the Union Government to the social condition of unskilled 'whites', as shown by Davies in his doctoral work of 1979, was to re-allocate them through

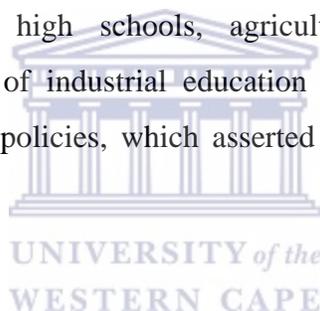
³²² Chisholm (1989), p.59

³²³ Grobler (1941), p.180

³²⁴ Grobler (1941), p.181

education and training to supervisory places within the racial division of labour at a time when unskilled ‘whites’ were being denied work by the mining industry. This was a consequence of their labour being considered ‘too expensive’ at that time. The various sectors within the governing classes³²⁶ also regarded the increase in ‘white’ labour union activity in that period as ‘a significant danger’ to the stabilisation of the emerging modern state. The provision of industrial schools was thus the Union Government’s way of ‘controlling’ ‘poor whites’, yet at the same time equipping them with trade skills and so encouraging them to participate in the capitalist labour market rather than remaining outside of it.³²⁷

After 1917 industrial schools were articulated as part of a wider penal and educational system, which included schools, orphanages, refuges, children’s homes and hostels. Industrial schools were also differentiated thereafter from provincial trade schools, technical high schools, agricultural and housecraft schools. Significantly, the system of industrial education that developed after 1917 was informed by wider racial policies, which asserted that free primary schooling, as



³²⁵ Grobler (1941), pp.180-182

³²⁶ Davies, R (1979), *Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa 1900-1960: An Historical Materialist Analysis of Class Formation and Class Relations*, (Brighton 1979, pp.97-143)

³²⁷ In noting the distinctive development of industrial schools in South Africa, it is nevertheless important to reflect that institutionalisation was a general international response at that time to the mounting social problems that emerged alongside growing industrialization. For example, the emergence of the indeterminate sentence in South Africa after 1910 and the focus on its ‘rehabilitative possibilities’ can be linked to similar developments in other countries. John Pratt has asserted that his choice of 1910 as the ending point of his research project (based in New Zealand) reflected the changes that had occurred in the penal landscape by that time. Pratt notes that it was at that point “with the introduction of the (NZ) Crimes Act Amendment Act, that we can make out the features of the penal landscape that has been predominant in the West for much of the century. At this point, as ways of trying to prevent entry to the prison, we find such initiatives as probation, borstals, separate measures for juveniles, inebriates and the mentally ill. Accompanying them was a surge of interest in the rehabilitative possibilities of indeterminate prison sentences, where attempts were made to fit sentence to offender rather than crime, which in turn also led to deeper inquiry into the accused’s character and personality.” See Pratt, J (1991), ‘*Punishment, History and Empire*’, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 24, 1991, p.118; The fact that juvenile justice systems were being reformed at this time (1890-1910) on a global stage is pertinent to the investigation in that many of the lessons that emanated from international practices and theoretical debates on childcare issues were transposed to and refined for the South African context. Also see Chisholm (1989), p.59

well as technical training, under Union Government control from 1907 could *only be provided for children of whose parents were both of 'european' descent.*³²⁸

The Provision of Industrial Schools

In Section B, Chapter 4, the differences between the provision of technical education facilities and industrial education facilities will be explained. Furthermore, it is also indicated there that while most of the industrial schools that were provided in the first two decades of the century sought to essentially respond to the various needs of the children of the 'poor white' population, there were significant differences between trade schools and government industrial schools. Government industrial schools were administered according to the regulations of the Children's Protection Act No.25 of 1913. The thesis focuses on this group of institutions.³²⁹

Linda Chisholm has asserted that:

Between 1911 and 1913, the legislative foundations for South African juvenile justice were laid down. The Prisons and Reformatories Act of 1911 formed the foundation of modern South African penal and children's legislation. Together with the 1913 Children's Protection Act, it entrenched the differential treatment of children in South Africa not only according to 'special categories of need', but also according to categories of class, colour and gender.³³⁰

The Children's Protection Act of 1913 was the mechanism whereby government industrial schools were provided "for the detention of destitute, waif and stray children (only) to prevent them from falling into crime, and for training and educating them". The 1913 Act also noted that "in every government industrial school males should, as far as is practicable, be kept separate and apart from females, and White persons should be kept separate from Coloured persons."³³¹ The

³²⁸ Chisholm (1989), p.59

³²⁹ As was noted in Section A, government industrial schools came to be referred to as schools of industries from 1944.

³³⁰ Chisholm (1989), p.103

³³¹ Union of South Africa (1913), *The Children's Protection Act No.25 of 1913- UG44 -1913*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.406)

rest of the chapter focuses on the development of the system of government industrial schools in South Africa and addresses the contextual, ideological and economic conditions that informed the decision to provide the first 'coloured' government industrial school at Ottery in 1948.

A brief summary of the provision of reformatory-like industrial schools for 'white' children between 1909 and 1934

The George Hofmeyr Industrial School was the first industrial school "to house children rescued from homes or circumstances when, if left to themselves, they might perforce drift into crimes".³³² Established at Standerton, Transvaal on the 1st October 1909 according to the provisions of Act 38 of 1909, the institution provided for 'white' boys *and* girls and was run more or less on the same lines as the reformatory at Emmasdale,³³³ near Heidelberg (Transvaal). Section 16 of the 1909 Act noted that any 'european' child found to have violated any of the eight violations listed below, could be ordered by any person or society working for the reclamation of children, to be sent to an Industrial School. The eight 'offences' included if a child:³³⁴

- a) Was found wandering;
- b) Was found to be destitute;
- c) Was caught under the influence of a criminal or a liquor addict;
- d) Was the daughter of a father convicted of a sexual offence against his child;
- e) Frequented a criminal or a reputed prostitute;
- f) Could no longer be controlled by parents or refused to attend, or deserted school;
- g) Lodged or resided with a prostitute;
- h) As a girl, was convicted of any crime for which any sentence of imprisonment might be imposed.³³⁵

³³² Union of South Africa (1913), *The Prison and Reformatories Act of 1911 - UG35-1911*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.235)

³³³ Grobler has noted that the Transvaal Industrial Schools Act, No.7 of 1910 formally laid down the basis for the application of the laws and regulations of reformatories to be extended to industrial schools. Notably, Emmasdale Reformatory, near Heidelberg-Transvaal, was established in 1906 for 'white' boys. Grobler (1941), p.111

³³⁴ Section 16 of the Transvaal Industrial Schools Act of 1910; Note the many similarities between the above provisions and those that provided for incarceration in the English Industrial School Act of 1857 as noted in the introduction of the chapter.

³³⁵ Grobler (1941), p.111

In January 1912, Emmasdale Reformatory was converted into an industrial school and all boys from the George Hofmeyr institution were transferred there. The boys that were previously resident at Emmasdale were transferred to Houtpoort Reformatory, also near Heidelberg, which had been established in January 1912.

It was asserted at that time however that one of the problems with the Transvaal Act of 1909 was that at least ten percent of the boys committed to industrial schools were below the age of twelve. These boys were perceived to be too 'young' to benefit from industrial training.³³⁶ The Emmasdale Management Board noted in 1913 that industrial schools "should be for boys of an age to profit to the utmost from industrial training, and the expensive staff and equipment is wasted on babies and very young children."³³⁷ The Prison and Reformatories Act of 1911, which initially administered these institutions, had sought to address the problem of 'wasting trade training on too-young children' by establishing two more industrial schools, administered more or less as reformatories, for very young destitute and delinquent children. This problem was resolved in 1913 when the responsibility for the institutions became part of the regulations of the Children's Protection Act.³³⁸ From 1913, the regulations of the Act determined that only children over the age of fourteen could be sent to industrial schools.

The work at George Hofmeyr was seen to be 'successful enough'³³⁹ though to warrant the establishment of two similar 'schools' at George (for boys) in 1912 and at Paarl (for girls) in 1915. Five more schools were planned in different parts of the Union at the start of 1913 in accordance with the Children's Protection Act No.25 of that year. An economic recession, however, ensured that by 1915 only one further school (at Paarl) had been established. An industrial school was established at

³³⁶ Grobler (1941), p.112

³³⁷ UG44 -1913, p.281, as cited in Grobler (1941), p.112

³³⁸ The Children's Protection Act was regarded as separate legislation for the administration of the needs of children. The Act was administered by the Department of Prisons in the period 1913 to 1917.

³³⁹ Grobler (1941), p.112

Dewetsdorp in 1918 and another in Kingwilliamstown in 1925. By 1934 there were seven industrial schools administered in terms of the Children's Protection Act.

The Children's Protection Act of 1913 and its amendment in 1937

Definitions

The conditions whereby children were 'committed' to industrial schools were explained earlier with regard to the 1857 English Industrial School Act and the Transvaal Act 38 of 1909. The Children's Protection Act of 1913 added a few further conditions for 'committal'. From 1913, the children that were 'regulated' by these conditions were referred to as 'children in need of care'. A child could then be sent to an industrial school if also found:

- a) To be begging in a public place, and being under the age of fourteen years;
- b) To have committed an offence within six months immediately preceding having been charged with committing another crime or offence;
- c) To have broken a lawfully bound contract as an apprentice as noted under Chapter VII of the Prisons and Reformatories Act of 1911;
- d) To be (being) maintained apart from his parents or legal guardian under domestic circumstances that may be deemed to be detrimental to the interests of such child;
- e) To be engaged in street trading in contravention of any law or by-law.³⁴⁰

However, the most significant aspect of the promulgation of the Children's Protection Act of 1913 was the way the Act expanded its jurisdiction. Van Reenen has noted that it was not only "a very common error to assume that all children committed under the regulations of the Children's Protection Act of 1913 were 'difficult' or 'problem' children," but it was also "easily forgotten that children could be deemed 'in need of care' because of the actions or 'social state' of their parent(s), guardian or custodian or unsuitable home conditions."³⁴¹ Van Reenen summarised the grounds for committal into four main groups:

- a) The unsuitability of the parent(s), guardian or custodian;

³⁴⁰ Union of South Africa (1913), *The Children's Protection Act of 1913*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.3)

³⁴¹ Van Reenen, TH (1953), *Handbook of the Children's Act*, (Durban, Butterworth and Co, p.96)

- b) Unsuitable home conditions;
- c) Inadequate control over a child;
- d) Uncontrollability of the child.³⁴²

With regard to the parent(s), guardian or custodian of a child, a child could be deemed 'in need of care' when:

- a) A child had no parents;
- b) A child's parents were unable to adequately provide care, whether for financial reasons or other reasons;
- c) A child's parents were found to be incompetent of providing care, be it because of mental, physical or moral debilities.³⁴³

With regard to destitution, a child could be deemed 'in need of care' if:

- a) The child was found to be without sufficient means of subsistence;
- b) A child's parents, who were legally responsible for the support of that child, lived under indigent circumstances and were unable by reason thereof to provide support for the child';
- c) A child's parent was dead, unknown, or couldn't be found;
- d) A child was in danger of 'falling into crime' or becoming a 'burden' to the state because of this indigency.³⁴⁴

Moreover, it is notable that nowhere in the Children's Protection Act of 1913 (or in the amended Children's Act of 1937) were there references made to the delinquency of a child. The term 'uncontrollability' was the closest term associated with anti-social behaviour that was used to describe children deemed 'in need of care.'³⁴⁵

The mechanism that was used to classify children deemed to possibly be 'in need of care' was the Children's Court. Van Reenen has noted that

Any child alleged to be a child in need of care may be brought before the children's court of the district in which the child resides by any policeman, probation officer, childcare worker or authorised officer, or by a parent, guardian or other person having the custody of the child. The co-operation of the person having custody of the child is therefore crucial. The children's court is empowered however to order that a person having custody of a child must produce the child before the court if so needed. If a parent refuses, he

³⁴² Van Reenen (1953), pp.96-97

³⁴³ Van Reenen (1953), p.97

³⁴⁴ Van Reenen (1953), pp.97-98

³⁴⁵ Van Reenen (1953), p.96

or she may be found guilty of an offence and severely fined. It is the children's court that determines whether a child is indeed in need of care, and whether a child must be institutionalised or provided with access to other forms of state sanction.³⁴⁶

The Children's Court was not necessarily a special court dealing with the needs of children. The regulations could well be fulfilled by an ordinary magistrate's court, which simply set aside a special room for enquiries into the various problems of children as determined by the Children's Protection Act. Once a child was 'found to be in need of care', the court may then have ordered that:

- a) The child was sent to an industrial school;
- b) The child was sent to a certified institution, namely children's homes, orphanages or hostels;
- c) The child was placed under the control of an approved agency;
- d) The child was placed in the care of any suitable person or institution designated by the court (otherwise known as apprenticeship);
- e) The child was returned to or allowed to remain in the custody of its parent, guardian or custodian in whose custody the child was before the initiation of the proceedings;
- f) Having found that a child was 'handicapped', the child needed to be transferred to a relevant Union Government department that could provide alternative state intervention.³⁴⁷

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The administration of the Children's Protection Act of 1913

The Children's Protection Act of 1913 served largely as an administrative Act that regulated the lives of children and their parents. Both the children that appeared before the Children's Court and their parents normally had no knowledge of legal proceedings (or had the financial means to resort to legal representation). Also, children and their parents normally appeared before the Children's Court only when they were seeking state intervention as a last resort.

It may thus well be argued that the Children's Protection Act played an almost insignificant role in the daily legal activities of the country. Given the almost routine way in which the Children's Court performed their tasks that may very well be so.

³⁴⁶ Van Reenen (1953), p.100

³⁴⁷ Van Reenen (1953), p.102

However, it is notable that the regulations of the Act did affect a significantly large section of the public and formed the main instrument for the performance of the daily tasks of a considerable body of persons and professionals. The regulations of the Children's Protection Act affected the activities of just about each and every organisation or body that sought to respond to the problems and needs of children, or in any way touched the lives of children.

When passed, the Children's Protection Act, No.25 of 1913, consolidated all previous legislation pertaining to children.³⁴⁸ When introducing the Act before Parliament in 1913, the Minister of Justice noted that the Act attempted to consolidate all childcare laws already in existence, while "introducing some further matters."³⁴⁹ Broadly speaking, the Act "was envisaged to follow the lines of the English measure known as the 'children's charter', which sought to safeguard the interests of children, to prevent cruelty and neglect, and to thwart children being engaged in certain occupations under a certain age."³⁵⁰ Conceding that the Act had largely been 'borrowed' from England, the Secretary of Education noted in 1918 that:

When, in 1908, the Children's Protection Act was passed in England, it was clearly enacted for the purposes of giving legislative effect to the teachings of experience. It must be presumed that when the Act was borrowed and when, with modifications, it became law for the Union in 1913, it was intended not only to make provision for the prevention of cruelty to children, and the punishment thereof, to ward off evil in various forms for unprotected children, but that it was meant to inaugurate a constructive policy. It gave expression to the intention not only to stop harmful processes, but also to initiate new or extended action for the benefit of the children, whose rights were being denied them.³⁵¹

When promulgated in 1913, the Children's Protection Act was at first administered by the Department of Prisons, and as could be expected, was mainly concerned with

³⁴⁸ Van Reenen (1953), p.1

³⁴⁹ Union of South Africa (1917), *Report of the Under Secretary for Education, 1917, G68 ED1917 (EDUC)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.72)

³⁵⁰ *G68 ED1917 (EDUC)*, p.72

³⁵¹ Union of South Africa (1918), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1918 - G68ED (EDUC)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, pp.2-3)

the problem of juvenile delinquency. However, given the context of childcare legislation at that time, such a broad generalisation can be very misleading. It is particularly notable that the passing of the Act in 1913 was the culmination of much negotiation and lobbying between prison officials, law officials and persons involved in social relief work. These parties cumulatively sought to remedy defects in South African legislation affecting children at that time, using the lessons and experiences of other international countries. The various parties sought to provide legal measures that would not only safeguard the overall interests of children, but also protect them from abuse and neglect. The Children's Protection Act proposed to "give children a better chance in life".³⁵²

Race, the Children's Protection Act and the Union Education Department

The Children's Protection Act was passed in 1913 to address the needs of children in South Africa based on international trends.³⁵³ It came into operation on the 1st October 1913 and was at first administered by the Department of Justice. Strictly speaking, the Act was administered by the Department of Prisons since the Director of Prisons was also the Secretary for Justice at that time. Van Reenen³⁵⁴ has noted that when the administration of the Children's Protection Act was transferred to the Union Education Department in 1917, it indicated an important change in the concept and perception of the treatment of juvenile delinquency in South Africa.

The growing confidence in the early decades of the twentieth century in the reformative and transformative value of education had by then served to further the claims made by the Union Education Department to take control of the administration of the Act, and the children governed by the Act. At that time, the transfer of industrial schools from the Department of Prisons to the Union Education

³⁵² Union of South Africa (1913), *House of Assembly Debates for 1913*, col.2654. Cited by Chisholm (1989), p.106

³⁵³ *G68 ED1917 (EDUC)*, p.72

³⁵⁴ Van Reenen (1953), p.3

Department was a direct result of much lobbying by education officials, child welfare societies, and private philanthropists.³⁵⁵

The mix of ideas that informed the belief in ‘child saving’ (dominated as it was by religious notions of reclamation and salvation) merged at that time with pressures to respond to the social consequences of change. These developments mirrored the emergence of ideas internationally at that time about the universalisation of adolescence as a stage of growth. Subsequently, much emphasis was placed on understanding the problems of adolescence in relation to the problems of delinquency. It was asserted that the period of adolescence was an unstable and uncontrolled stage in the development of ‘useful citizens’ and thus needed to be controlled and regulated by the emerging modern state.³⁵⁶

In discussions between education, welfare and prison officials, it was argued that the needs of ‘white’ children ‘prone to commit crime’ could only really be addressed if the Union Education Department was given control over the processes and mechanisms that regulated acts of juvenile delinquency.³⁵⁷ It is notable in this regard that the struggle for the control and administration of industrial schools was not ‘easily won’ by the Union Education Department. This was clear from the

³⁵⁵ Chisholm has noted that the efforts of the Children’s Aid Society on the Rand in the period after the passing of the 1913 Act, served to significantly inform developments that led to industrial schools becoming mainly places where artisan training could take place. As far as the Society was concerned, administration of such schools by the Prisons Department was the major stumbling block to the appropriate education and training of ‘poor white’ children at that time. The thrust of their criticisms was that penal discipline as exercised in reformatories and industrial schools was repressive and antagonistic to the reforming principles underlying their establishment. The Children’s Aid Society (CAS) thus made representations to Jacob De Villiers Roos to remove the administration of these institutions from the Prisons Department to the Union Education Department. This type of pressure ensured the transfer of industrial schools to the Union Education Department in 1917. The CAS asserted at the time that industrial schools needed to be equipping their charges with ‘skills’ suitable for the labour market, as was evident when the effects of wider social policies that neglected the needs of ‘poor whites’, were viewed. See Chisholm (1989), Chapter 4: “*Constructing and managing the ‘child in need of care’: Ideology and practice of the Children’s Aid Society 1909-1917*”, pp.120-123

³⁵⁶ Union of South Africa (1925), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1924-1925*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.45) The Report noted that the age of adulthood had been fixed at twenty-one years.

³⁵⁷ Education officials increasingly used scientific and psychological knowledge about childhood, youth and adolescence to qualify their claim for control of industrial schools and reformatories.

subsequent transfer of reformatories to the Union Education Department some seventeen years later.

Thereafter, the Union Education Department exerted much effort in administering the various government industrial schools. Officials of the Union Education Department noted in 1917 that government industrial schools were envisaged as institutions that could “give the nation back its homes” by protecting children from the “evil and insidious influences of a diseased society, by saving them from unnatural and vicious homes, and keeping them away from the temptations of the streets.”³⁵⁸ Government industrial schools were thus regarded as places where the Union Government could “shelter poor white children, and nurture them physically, morally, intellectually, and as far as possible, vocationally.” The institutions were also regarded as mechanisms that could be used to equip ‘poor white’ children “as men and women, competent to fulfil intelligently and honourably their duties as citizens as well as builders of comfortable and happy homes”.³⁵⁹

In an address to the Children’s Aid Society in January 1917, the Under Secretary for Education asserted that

We are realizing more and more that the child is the centre of the social problem and our hope of its ultimate solution, and that the constraining motive of all of the educational policies of Church and State, of legislation and philanthropy was the protection of the child, in whose presence sectionalisms become meaningless and humanity becomes supreme.³⁶⁰

In this regard, it is notable that the Children’s Protection Act of 1913 (as well as the 1920 Hostel’s Act and mother’s pensions legislation of 1921) was *essentially* concerned with the provision of institutions and social welfare relief for ‘white’ children. The definition of the ‘child in need of care’, as advanced by the Union Government and welfare agencies at that time, was “predicated on class and racial prejudices and assumptions, which assumed that the institutional subject was poor,

³⁵⁸ G68 ED1917 (EDUC), p.75

³⁵⁹ G68 ED1917 (EDUC), p.75

³⁶⁰ G68 ED1917 (EDUC), p.76

white and “not infrequently exposed to social circumstances and practices which reformers in the State and child welfare sought to control”.³⁶¹

It is also clear that the administration of government industrial schools was somewhat informed by the perceived requirements of (and the various needs within) urban areas at that time. This is particularly evident in the observation by Davies that the provision of industrial schools after the recession of 1912-13, as part of a campaign by the Union Government to resettle ‘poor whites’ in rural areas, had been reversed in 1916 when the Union Government shifted its emphasis to finding employment for ‘poor whites’ in industry.³⁶²

Changes in the 1930s

With different departments administering to the needs of government industrial schools and reformatories,³⁶³ and especially considering the lack of provision for the transfer of children from one type of institution to the other (be it certified institutions, government industrial schools, reformatories or hostels), it was inevitable that pressure would be exerted for the transfer of reformatories and hostels to the Union Education Department. This development took place in 1934. (As an obvious corollary, probation services were also placed under the supervision of the Union Education Department in 1935).

The transfer of reformatories to the Union Education Department signalled a new era in South Africa, where the supervision of all dependent, neglected, abused, delinquent, and other supposedly maladjusted children subsequently fell under the administration of the Union Education Department for the first time. This state of affairs required new legislation and the consolidation of existing legislation concerning destitute, neglected, maladjusted, and delinquent children. In 1934 the *Interdepartmental Committee on Destitute, Neglected, Maladjusted and Delinquent Children and Young Persons* was appointed to evaluate the existing policy

³⁶¹ Chisholm (1989), p.382

³⁶² Chisholm (1989), p.212

³⁶³ Reformatories fell under the Prisons Department and Industrial schools under Education.

principles, explanations of and solutions for juvenile delinquency. The proposals that emerged from this investigation culminated in the passing of the Children's Act, No.31 of 1937. The Secretary of Education noted in 1938 that the Children's Act of 1937 was 'amongst the most enlightened forms of legislation in the world on child welfare' and asserted that the passing of the Act represented the considerable advances made over the twenty five years before 1937, both in South Africa and overseas, 'in the theory and practice of child and juvenile welfare.'³⁶⁴

This Act showed clear divergences from the previous Children's Protection Act. Van Reenen has noted that the new Act embodied the provisions of four sets of previous regulations. These were:

- a) The Children's Protection Act of 1913, as amended in 1921 and 1931;
- b) The Adoption of Children's Act, No.25 of 1923;
- c) Chapter VII of the Prisons and Reformatories Act, No.13 of 1911;
- d) The Prisons and Reformatories Amendment Act, No.46 of 1920, in so far as it affected juvenile offenders and the establishment of certified institutions.³⁶⁵

One of the most significant changes in the Act was the way in which the treatment of juvenile delinquents was outlined. Van Reenen has noted that the whole question of the treatment of juvenile delinquency was addressed by the Act as a problem best resolved by educative mechanisms. Van Reenen noted that:

The treatment of juvenile delinquents couldn't wholly be met by purely penal or deterrent measures. Such treatment had to begin to emphasise the principles of constructive re-education, mental hygiene and social rehabilitation, although it must be noted that the Children's Act was not unmindful of the interests of society.³⁶⁶

Van Reenen asserted that the chief object of the Children's Act was not to treat juvenile delinquents as criminals:

The principle underlying this Act is that the State should not punish a child of tender years as a criminal and stamp him as such throughout his after life,

³⁶⁴ Union Of South Africa (1938), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1937 - UG 51-1938*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.33)

³⁶⁵ Van Reenen (1953), p.3

³⁶⁶ Van Reenen (1953), p.4

but that it should endeavour by taking him out of his surroundings to educate him and uplift him and too make him gradually understand the difference between good conduct and bad conduct. Since the Children's Act of 1937, children or young people who show anti-social conduct are dealt with not as criminals but in an entirely different way.³⁶⁷

It was asserted thereafter that the same measures that were adopted to deal with the problems of destitution and neglect could be used to deal with the problem of juvenile delinquency. It was argued that by regarding juvenile delinquency as an educational dilemma, there was then an essential unity in the problems of destitution, neglect and delinquency. The Secretary of Education noted in 1938 that:

Psychologically, there are no basic differences between a non-delinquent uncontrollable child and a child who has committed an offence. They both belong to the psychological group known as maladjusted, and as the causes of their maladjustment are the same, the methods of treatment should largely be similar.³⁶⁸

After 1937 the notion that the neglected child demonstrated tendencies to become a delinquent child was for the first time officially sanctioned by the Children's Act.³⁶⁹ This development was significantly informed by the growing influence of the developing sciences at that time. Reformatories, industrial schools, hostels, and probation services were thus regarded as the means not to punish the delinquent (as under the penal code), but rather to rehabilitate and re-educate via 'scientific intervention' in the form of psychological tests.³⁷⁰

The passing of the Children's Act of 1937 must also be located in a period when there was a considerable expansion of the services provided by child welfare

³⁶⁷ Van Reenen (1953), p.4

³⁶⁸ UG 51-1938, p.33

³⁶⁹ Rehm has noted that German legislation also assumed a close relationship between delinquency and destitution. See Rehm, M (1925), *Das Kind in der Gesellschaft*, (Bonn, p.381). Cited in Grobler (1941), p.242; It was noted in 1937 that in English legislation there was also a 'essential harmony' between the problem of destitution and neglect of children and the problem of juvenile delinquency. See Union of South Africa (1937), *The Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Destitute, Neglected, Maladjusted and Delinquent children and Young Persons of 1934-1937*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.7)

³⁷⁰ Grobler has contended that the "fundamental connection between dependency and delinquency found its confirmation in the practice and results of psychology and psychiatry. For the purposes of

organisations, probation officers and social workers.³⁷¹ From 1937 the Union Government increasingly committed itself to providing and extending welfare services for the ‘white’ working class, and especially ‘poor whites’. In the period of 1924 to 1934, significant steps had been taken to co-ordinate the welfare system, as well as to professionalise social work. “The formation of the South African National Council for Child Welfare in 1924 provided a forum through which common strategies could be expressed and developed thereafter.”³⁷²

A consequence of this growth in welfare and social work was that institutionalisation was no longer regarded as the most effective way of dealing with the social needs of children ‘in need of care’. As was the international trend at that time, the dominant strategy of the Union Government was more and more based on a policy of regulating ‘white’ children within their communities, rather than removing them to institutions.

After 1937 the Union Education Department committed itself to use non-institutional methods as much as possible. This was a direct consequence of the influence of the Department of Social Welfare. Subsequently, instead of committing a ‘white’ delinquent to an institution, “the better and more natural reformative influence of the home”³⁷³ was encouraged. Alternatively, the use of foster care and adoption was preferred as methods of responding to the needs of children. At that time, foster parents received quite significant maintenance grants.³⁷⁴

In October 1937 the Department of Social Welfare was formally established. Given the increased preference to firstly respond to the social conditions of ‘white’ children (that normally would have been sent to Union Education Department

combating irregular behaviour, penal law and punishment was therefore of secondary importance”. See Grobler (1941), p.123

³⁷¹ Malherbe, EG (ed)(1934), *Handbook on Education and Social Work in South Africa*, (Pretoria, pp.33-79); Cited in Chisholm (1989, p.144)

³⁷² Malherbe, EG (ed)(1934), *Handbook on Education and Social Work in South Africa*, (Pretoria, p.38)

³⁷³ Grobler (1941), p.119

³⁷⁴ Chisholm (1989), pp.143-160

institutions), it then came as no surprise that the administration of the Children's Act of 1937 was subsequently transferred to the control of the Welfare Department. The Union Education Department retained control however of the administration and management of reformatories and government industrial schools on the grounds that the institutions were essentially educational facilities in which a large proportion of the programme consisted of school work and vocational training. The functions of the Department of Social Welfare comprised of the control of private institutions, the after-care of 'white' children and young persons released from institutions (including reformatories and industrial schools), the supervision of direct committals from the courts to private non-institutional care, as well as adoptions and probation services. Probation services were transferred to the Welfare Department and was extended and re-organised to liaise more efficiently with other institutions and areas.

Chisholm has noted that the "reform of the penal, educational and social systems became metaphors for building the conditions necessary for maintaining a modern state in which English and Afrikaans-speakers were united."³⁷⁵ The role of the Union Education Department in this regard was to act more as an "integrating force", as a backup to the initial efforts of social workers. Social workers were required to "re-adjust the child in the environment in which they showed the need for re-adjustment."³⁷⁶ When social workers were unsuccessful, the institutions provided by the Union Education Department were then used as 'disciplinary environments' whereby 'white' children could be 'forcefully reminded' of their duties to the overall 'white' population. As a consequence of this discourse, "the white delinquent was increasingly constituted not as a threat to be expelled, but as assimiliable and reformable."³⁷⁷

The three-tiered-layer system of probation, hostel and reformatory (industrial schools fell under the latter) proposed by the Children's Act of 1937 was then

³⁷⁵ Chisholm (1989), p.313

³⁷⁶ Penal Reform League of South Africa (1948), *Community and Crime*, no.2, 1948; Cited in Chisholm (1989), p.314

³⁷⁷ Chisholm (1989), p.314

regarded as providing a gradual means of re-adjustment to the life of the community. It emerged as a significant consolidation of the graded welfare and institutional measures that had been brought into being for 'white' juveniles after the First World War, and which had been extended under the Pact government.

In this period, the Children's Courts were also placed for the first time on a legal basis. In its sittings, the 'special court' was required then not so much to "ascertain the guilt of the child" (as in the open legal court), as to "investigate the root causes of his/her maladjustment. Instead of a sentence, the court was required to apply measures aimed at the social reconstruction of the child and the home."³⁷⁸

Chisholm has noted that from the mid-1920s the language of 'science' and 'medicine', of 'treatment', 'investigation' and social and individual 'pathology' had come to predominate over the earlier approaches based on principles of 'salvation' and 'religious conversion'. This shift in penological thinking at that time was in keeping with the growing emphasis on the control of delinquency through ideological means, which drew "strongly on the 'expert' knowledge of a new class of professional social workers, psychiatrists and educationalists schooled in modern techniques of managing deviancy."³⁷⁹ In this way, the developing social policies were cast alongside 'scientific concerns' like 'sanitation', 'health' and crime prevention, which enabled and justified the symbolic 'identification', 'isolation and 'neutralisation' of perceived social threats.³⁸⁰

The new emphasis on the psychological, educational and social make-up of the 'offender' after 1937 does not mean that these institutions lost their punitive and repressive functions. Rather, it serves to highlight the increasing attempts at that time to locate authority within civil society and the individual psyche. Discipline here was conveyed through both social regulation and individual self-discipline.³⁸¹

³⁷⁸ Van Reenen, (1953), p.6

³⁷⁹ Chisholm (1989), p.153-165, 354-5; Dubow (1995), p.235

³⁸⁰ Dubow (1995), p.236

³⁸¹ Chisholm (1989), p.22

In this regard, the provision of academic schooling and trade training at government industrial schools took on crucial significance. In terms of the internal regulation of the individual psyche, education and training were regarded as the building blocks through which a particular form of ‘moral re-training’ could be emphasised. Children could be subjected to educational and trade proficiency tests that not only imparted ‘skills’ but also taught them discipline, pride and patience. These values were considered crucial for the development of a modernising state. Educative tools were regarded as the key mechanisms to effect a ‘spiritual balances in the lives of individual children and in so doing, bring about their social rehabilitation.’³⁸² While education and training had served a dual purpose in the 1920s and 1930s in relation to the institutionalisation of ‘poor white’ youths in industrial schools by providing both skills to secure employment and a means of ‘moral and spiritual training’, in the period after 1938 education and training lost its ‘practical emphasis. Education and training in government industrial schools in this period focused essentially on ‘regulating’ the individual self and ‘building up normal sentiments’. The role of the Union Education Department in providing for children ‘in need of care’ had therefore taken on a significantly different shape by 1945.

Delinquency, the role of education and Afrikaner Nationalism

The changes that took place in the ways in which the education department responded to change in the 1930s were also significantly informed by the increasing influence of Afrikaner Nationalism at that time. Chisholm has noted that the triple-level impact of the 1929-1932 Great Depression, the transformation by the state of the society in the interests of secondary industrialisation, and the consequences of the state’s ‘civilised labour policy’ pursued in the 1920s, were crucial developments in the fostering of pre-conditions for the political and ideological re-allignment of the Union Government during the 1930s.³⁸³ The formation of the United Party

³⁸² See Section A

³⁸³ See Chisholm (1989), p.295; also pp.296-298. Concern was expressed at that time about the fact that even though the exodus of unskilled, poor ‘afrikaners’ to the city was partly met by employment in the new manufacturing industries, these industries had an equal interest in employing cheaper unskilled ‘non-white’ labour.

government in 1934 did not only spark off an economic revival in which secondary industries ‘took off’, but also highlighted the need for greater social regulation.

These developments provided a material context for the transformation of Afrikaner Nationalism during the 1930s. Dan O’Meara has convincingly argued that the urban experience of rapid capitalist development was increasingly re-interpreted in this period, via the Afrikaner Broederbond, within a Christian Nationalist ideological framework. He contends that despite differences in emphasis among key Afrikaner intellectuals returning from Europe seeking to ‘ply their trade’ in their respective fields, enough common ground existed between them on various issues to allow for the rapid growth of Afrikaner Nationalism. These issues included the particular relationship that was being developed between class and nationalism, the emphasis given by these intellectuals to the dangers of class divisions between ‘afrikaners’, and the increased emphasis on the need for economic mobilisation among ‘afrikaners’ alongside the push for republicanism.

The 1930s was characterised by the attempts of ‘afrikaner’ intellectuals inspired by Christian Nationalism to re-interpret social life in terms of this nationalist vision in almost all intellectual arenas. The use of ethnic mobilisers in this period was part of a conscious attempt in the 1930s to give “an intellectual basis to the ideology of Afrikaner Nationalism.”³⁸⁴ Dan O’Meara³⁸⁵ has asserted that this group of ‘*volkekundiges*’ consciously adapted from European scholarship a particular intellectual tradition at that time that fitted both their needs to define their own notion of the *volk* and to project this definition on other ethnic groups in South Africa. These ideas were spread in a relatively small intellectual community and then articulated to the nascent Afrikaner Nationalist movement and eventually to the whole state system.³⁸⁶

³⁸⁴ Van Zyl Smit (1989), p. 228

³⁸⁵ O’Meara (1983), *Volkskapitalisme: Class, capital and ideology in the Development of Afrikaner nationalism, 1934-1948* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, p.71)

³⁸⁶ Van Zyl Smit (1989), p.229

According to the conceptualisation of the ‘nation’ by these ‘afrikaner’ academics, crime and delinquency were regarded as ‘unnatural’ to the ‘afrikaner’ population. Academic criminologists in particular asserted that the ‘solution to crime’ lay in increased efforts to ‘strengthen the *volk*’. The focus on the issues of crime by Afrikaner Nationalists from the 1930s was on how the control thereof informed the promotion of the nationalist cause, in which ‘afrikaner’ economic, political and ideological interests were paramount.³⁸⁷ In this regard, they argued that the *volk* was best protected by the complete separation of the various ‘races’ in all aspects of social life. Afrikaner Nationalists asserted at that time that the educational, welfare, and economic needs of the various ‘races’ had to not only be provided separately, but that it also required completely separate forms of regulation. The rise in Afrikaner Nationalism, which culminated in the National Party victory in the elections of 1948, thus served to inform the provision of educational provision in particular ways thereafter.

At that time social reformers were attempting to address the needs of ‘non-white’ children in much the same way that the stabilisation of the ‘white’ working class had been articulated in terms of ‘white’ juvenile crime and the link between schooling and housing in the early 1920s. The key difference in the 1940s was that the concern for the stabilisation of the ‘non-white’ urban working class was expressed in a language of anxiety about ‘their’ high levels of delinquency, low levels of schooling and poor housing conditions.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on providing a context for the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in 1948. It has been indicated that the provision of industrial education was intrinsically linked to the ‘poor white’ question of the early decades of the twentieth century. In this regard, industrial schools sought both to equip predominantly ‘afrikaner’ youth with skills for employment, as well as to ensure that

³⁸⁷ O’Meara (1983), pp.67-78

they acquired ‘habits of work’ and ‘moral training’. It is asserted that by 1948, the role of government industrial schools had changed significantly. By that time, the institutions had come to play a far more ‘disciplinary role’ and was provided essentially for those deemed to be in need of more ‘severe discipline’ and training. In Chapter 4 of Section B, it is outlined how by the mid-1940s a number of alternative sets of state institutions had been developed to provide trade training for ‘white’ indigent children. These institutions included technical high schools, housecraft schools, commercial and agricultural schools, and schools of industries.

In Section B, Chapter 3, it is also noted that by 1948 ‘white’ schools of industries had come to provide differentiated programmes based on the psychological ‘grade’ of individual children. Children were sent to particular schools of industries at that time based on their grading as a child of (a) normal intelligence, (b) subnormal intelligence, and (c) a behaviour deviate. Most of the ‘white’ children that were committed to schools of industries after 1945 were deemed to be either of subnormal intelligence or indigent to the extent that they required more controlled ‘surveillance’.³⁸⁸ It is significant that when the Ottery School of Industries was opened in 1948, the ‘coloured’ boys sent there were all categorised as ‘behaviour deviates’. In the cases of the ‘coloured’ boys, this categorisation was not based on intelligence tests. Rather, it was based on the type of education that was thought appropriate for ‘coloured’ boys at that time and the estimation of their scholastic abilities. Ironically, the scholastic abilities of the various ‘coloured’ boys were conversely used to inform the ‘scientific’ grading of the boys and the type of educational and trade training provision that they were subsequently given. This labelling of all ‘coloured’ boys as ‘behaviour deviates’ at that time served to justify the ‘better’ facilities provided at ‘white’ schools of industries.

Van Reenen has noted that by the end of the Second World War the existing fifteen ‘white’ schools of industries were strictly categorised according to intelligence levels of the various children. He noted that:

Seven of the institutions (four for boys and three for girls) cater especially for mentally-retarded children. Two of the institutions cater for bright children of good behaviour but who are significantly disadvantaged by either their indigency or the state of their home life. These institutions have special facilities for commercial education that will hopefully provide a means of subsistence for the children. One of the institutions provide for children who exhibit pronounced behavioural maladjustment as a last endeavour to prevent them from being sent to a reformatory. The remaining five institutions provided for difficult children. All the institutions for boys provide technical vocational training of an advanced nature in a variety of trades and vocations, such as baking, blacksmithing, boot and shoe making, bricklaying, cabinet making, carpentry and joinery, fitting and turning, motor mechanics, painting and decorating, plastering, plumbing, tailoring, upholstery, etc.³⁸⁹



³⁸⁸ See Section B, Chapter 3

³⁸⁹ Van Reenen (1953), pp.47-48

Chapter 3:

Psychologising the

‘Industrial’ Child

The logo of the University of the Western Cape is centered behind the title. It features a classical building with columns and a pediment, with the text 'UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE' written below it in a serif font.

Introduction

It was noted in Section A that psychological and ‘scientific’ knowledge became an intrinsic aspect of the provision of care in schools of industries³⁹⁰ after 1946. The increased provision of psychological services at ‘correctional’ institutions after 1946 reflected the development at that time of a close relationship between the Union Education Department and professional psychologists. It was argued that the provision of psychological services, as well as the ideas that informed that provision, was linked at that time to debates about ‘race inferiority’, ‘social maladjustment’ and ‘mental backwardness’.

In South Africa, the advent of psychological testing from the 1920s had brought about a new era in the study of children deemed to ‘suffer’ from mental inadequacies. It also later had a profound effect on the child welfare movement from the 1930s. The main contribution of psychological testing at that time was that it provided a ‘scientific’ mechanism to distinguish within particular communities between the ‘normal’ and the ‘abnormal’ child. This focus on the psychological needs of the various children was regarded as a ‘constructive’ way of understanding the social needs of society³⁹¹.

In this chapter the model of the *medicalisation* of the needs of the child is used to understand social policy for children in South Africa deemed to be ‘in need of state care’ from the 1920s. This model is particularly useful in understanding Union Government policy with regard to the nature and form of psychological services at reformatories and industrial schools/schools of industries after 1945.

It is argued that the ‘medical’ approach (through psychology) that was adopted to address the needs of indigent children in South Africa after 1945 served to ‘concretise’ the link that had been made previously between poverty and

³⁹⁰ See Section A, p.50

³⁹¹ See Section A, p.14

delinquency. As was the case with social welfare provision after 1937, the main objective of this approach was to effectively govern individual families through the guidance of their inner relationships and responsibilities.

The 'Medicalisation Model'

Throughout the centuries children have been the central foci of social policy studies based on their potential for change. In this regard, the purpose of studying the 'mind of a child' as a feature of his development during the nineteenth century was to find ways of understanding which human traits were innate and how many were learned (also how they were learned). By the 1920s social policy in relation to children had begun to focus far more on the emotions of the child. During this period the emphasis was on the nature of the child's individual adjustment and integration within the community, and with the mass assessment of IQ through mental testing. In order to understand the child's integration within his community, more attention was given to the notion of the construction of 'social communities' and to ways of understanding 'social problems'. From the 1920s the 'management of the minds of children' was regarded as a useful way of understanding the needs, and regulating the problems, of social communities.

During the inter-war period, the 'mental welfare' of children was increasingly administered by the field of educational psychology, and was informed by the ideas within various disciplines involved in child guidance. The attempt to unite the body and mind of the child with the social and material environment had by then found its institutional expression in the provision of a number of child guidance clinics and various kinds of social institutions for children.

Harry Hendrick has asserted that this movement 'away from the body' can also be interpreted as an indication that children suffering malnutrition and ill health were not deemed to be of 'sufficient investment significance' to warrant the necessary expenditure. In this regard, the expansion of the child welfare movements (through the greater provision of child care facilities) was regarded as a far more popular

source of protecting the future since it promised to regulate families, harmonise individuals and, in so doing, enhance national mental health capacities. In relation to Great Britain, Hendrick asserted that national mental health came to be measured by the degree of control over the children of the country.

In attempting to deal with the emotional life of children, the clinics looked to the growth to maturity. But a healthy maturity could only be reached by *properly-adjusted children*. (And) in order to produce such children it was necessary to understand their wishes and anxieties.³⁹²

In this period, the ideas of education specialists like John Dewey³⁹³ clearly informed such an approach. Dewey asserted that children had to be addressed as children rather than future adults. He regarded the education of children as an end in itself and not as a preparation for adult life. These ‘progressive’ ideas provided children with greater opportunities in terms of social care.

It would seem however that specialists like the Italian psychiatrist, Montessori, also had significant influence on the development of child-care policy.³⁹⁴ At that time, the ideas of Dewey and Montessori were regarded to have many things in common.

Both have organised experimental schools. Both have emphasised the freedom, self-activity and self-education of the child. Both have made significant use of ‘practical life activities’. The central difference between the two theorists is that Montessori provides a set of mechanically simple devices that in large measure do the teaching. Montessori is only able to provide such a simple and clear notion of education because she has a very narrow conception of education. Her idea of engaging in the exercise of practical life and freedom is to control and study children in confined environments.³⁹⁵

The ‘progressive’ impulse to treat the ‘child as a child’ and ‘to attempt to understand its condition’ found a significant ally in the discipline of psychology³⁹⁶ in that

³⁹² Hendrick, H (1994), *Child Welfare: England 1872-1989*, (London, Routledge, p.15)

³⁹³ Dewey, J (1900), *The School and Society*, (Chicago, Phoenix Books, 1960, p.3)

³⁹⁴ See Babini, V (2000), ‘Science, Feminism and Education: the Early Work of Maria Montessori’ (translated by Morgan S & Pick D), *History Workshop Journal*, No.49, pp.45-68, (Oxford University Press)

³⁹⁵ Montessori, M (1912), *The Montessori Method* (with an Introduction by J.McV.Hunt), (New York, Schocken Books, 1964, p.xviii)

³⁹⁶ Education policy-makers used ‘science’ to justify their calls for the transfer of reformatories and industrial schools to the care of the Union Education Department in both the period before 1917 (when industrial schools were transferred to the control of the Union Education Department), and

period. Psychology served to provide and sustain many of the claims of the ‘childcare’ movement, and in promoting its causes. In particular, psychology emphasised the growing need to ‘adjust’ children to their environment, which necessitated dealing with their emotional development. Psychology³⁹⁷ allowed educationalists and other ‘social reformers’ to call on the support of science when pressed to defend or explain their philosophies.

This (limited) progressivism in childcare policy brought a focus on the minds of children not only by the medical and pedagogical professions, but also by social workers, educationalists, penal reformers, policy-makers and parents. By 1940 social, medical and psychiatric knowledge of children was such that the mind-body unity, in common with environmental and familial influences, gave children (and notions of childhood) a greater sense of depth than at any other time in their history. By that time, the ‘excavation of the minds of children’, together with the presence and surveillance of their bodies through the collective experiences of doctors, dentists and nutritionists after the introduction of medical inspection and school feeding schemes, had given children detailed individual and group histories for the first time.

With regard to the South African context, the way in which ‘scientific expertise’ meshed with the political, social and economic policies of the Union Government, had great significance for child care provision. As Nikolas Rose has observed, transformation in terms of child welfare usually involved a racial, educational, familial, medical, social or political dimension.

In different ways, at different times, and by many different routes varying from one section of society to another, the health, welfare, and rearing of

again in the period before 1934 (when reformatories were likewise transferred to Union Education Department). See Union of South Africa, *Annual Reports of the Union Education Department for 1916, 1917, 1918, 1930, and 1931*, (Pretoria, Government Printer). With regard to Great Britain, Hendrick has asserted that by the 1920s “there was no doubt that education and certain branches of psychology were inseparable in their daily practices”. See Hendrick, (1994), p.150).

³⁹⁷ It is acknowledged that it is problematic to ‘homogenise’ psychology in this way. In order not to engage with the differences between for example Freudianism and behaviourism, this homogenisation is unavoidable.

children have been linked in thought and practice to the destiny of the nation and the responsibilities of the state.³⁹⁸

Saul Dubow has argued that the mental hygiene movement in South Africa, especially when it involved the protection and care of children, has always been characterised by a complex mesh of notions of ‘race deterioration’ and ‘social decay’.

While notions of protection and care were genuine motivations on the part of the ‘progressive’ movement, these concerns “co-existed with wider anxieties about the consequences of ‘race deterioration’ and the prevalence of social pathology within the broader body politic”.³⁹⁹

Don Foster has also argued that much of the new-found awareness towards the mental hygiene of children in South Africa after Union was concerned with ‘social ordering’, which focused on finding ways of ‘regulating’ the various race groups. “This constituted at least as much motivation as humanitarian issues”⁴⁰⁰.

Early history of this ‘medicalisation’ in South Africa

In South Africa the manifestation of this approach, particularly with regard to children in industrial schools and reformatories, is best viewed in the development of policy towards mental handicap. Lea and Foster (1990) define mental handicap as ‘a concept of medical and social origin which is applied to people deemed to deviate mentally from the norm.’⁴⁰¹ Mental handicap therefore implied difference. This difference culminated in the differential treatment of those determined to require attention. In South Africa however, individuals ‘determined’ to have a mental handicap have not only received differential treatment according to the severity of their ‘handicap’, but also on the basis of their racial classification.

Those who are regarded as mentally handicapped in South Africa receive differential treatment on a number of bases, firstly, on the basis of their being

³⁹⁸ Rose, N (1990), *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*, (London, Routledge, p.157)

³⁹⁹ Dubow, S (1995), *Illicit Union: Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*, (Johannesburg, Wits University Press, p.146)

⁴⁰⁰ Foster D, ‘Historical and legal traces 1800-1900’, in Lea, S & Foster, D (eds) (1990), *Perspectives on Mental Handicap in South Africa* (Durban, Butterworths, p.38)

⁴⁰¹ Lea & Foster (1990), p.291

‘handicapped’, secondly, on the basis of the severity of the handicap, and thirdly, on the basis of their racial classification.⁴⁰²

Furthermore, this mental handicap was not only grounded in a theory of difference between ‘normality and abnormality’, but was firmly grounded in a theory of ‘race’, which had its roots well before the apartheid era post 1948.

Commissioner of Mental Hygiene, DT Dunston, noted in 1929:

Now, the (‘white’) South-African-born rightly regards himself as separated from the coloured and natives by an unbridgeable gulf created in the history of our country and our people. When we therefore find some of our poor mixing intimately with these inferior ethnic types, we may justifiably conclude that they by doing so sacrifice the heritage of race, through a certain community of interests with them. It will thus be seen that Mental Hygiene concerns itself with much more than mere intelligence and mental deviation, it deals with economic inadequacy, social mindedness and adaptation to approved standards of living.⁴⁰³

The Van Schalkwyk Commission of 1928-30 claimed that to suggest that the ‘white subnormal’ was inferior to the ‘native’ was absurd since “this inferiority was mainly one of irresponsibility and unreliability and *the special education system* which we recommend is *designed to correct this*”(my emphases). “The problem in the economic sphere is in South Africa merely a portion of the larger problem of the conflict between a civilised and an uncivilised race. A contributory cause of poor whiteism is the inability of this class of European to maintain a civilised standard of living in the face of competition with non-Europeans in semi-skilled and unskilled occupations.”⁴⁰⁴

Owing to the “peculiar racial and economic facts connected with the education and training of subnormal children in South Africa,”⁴⁰⁵ the Van Schalkwyk Commission had contended in 1928-30 that:

⁴⁰² Lea & Foster (1990), p.14

⁴⁰³ Union of South Africa (1929), *Report of the Commissioner for Mental Hygiene 1926-28*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, pp.25-29)

⁴⁰⁴ Union of South Africa (1930), *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Mental Deficiency (hereafter the Van Schalkwyk Commission Report- G68 E Educ 1/28)*, (Pretoria, Union Education Department, 1928-1930, p.6)

⁴⁰⁵ Van Schalkwyk Commission Report, p 4

The Report (of the Commission) does not deal with mental defect as it affects non-Europeans. Mental defect amongst non-Europeans, particularly Natives, does not present the serious problem that it does amongst Europeans on account of the far less complex state of the non-European society and the relatively simple demands made upon non-Europeans in social adjustment.⁴⁰⁶

Furthermore,

On a closer study of the problem it will be seen that the way in which mental defect affects Europeans is somewhat different from its effects in the case of non-Europeans. The criterion for mental defect is an innate deficiency of mental powers that manifests itself in a lack of social adaptiveness to the outside competitive world. On the basis of this criterion it should be admitted that higher mental qualities are generally considered necessary for a European. He needs these qualities to fend for himself in South Africa far more than are required by a non-European, especially the Native, for whom the niche in the present economic system is easily found.⁴⁰⁷

Subsequently, a political dynamic (and not humanitarian concern) determined that 'white' mental 'subnormality' was associated with the consequences of 'poor whiteism', and that 'white subnormals' would benefit greatly from further assessment and mental hygiene facilities. It was this group which was increasingly brought under the widening control of state apparatuses (based on political and class rationales). The state's political strategy of the inter-war period (vis-à-vis mental health) subsequently focused on the 'upliftment' of 'poor whites'.⁴⁰⁸

'Mental defectiveness'

Susan Lea and Don Foster⁴⁰⁹ have also argued that it was the advent of psychological testing that heralded a new era for mental handicap in South Africa, and that this had profound effects on the child welfare movement. It served to significantly alter the position of people with mental handicap within society

⁴⁰⁶ Van Schalkwyk Commission Report, p.20

⁴⁰⁷ Van Schalkwyk Commission Report, p.20

⁴⁰⁸ Foster has argued that "it was also based on an attitudinal tendency of 'white' mental health care workers at the time that Natives and Coloureds were 'inferior races' and therefore did not warrant attention". See Lea and Foster (1990), p.53

⁴⁰⁹ Lea & Foster (1990), p. 5

through distinguishing clearly between those of ‘normal’ mind, and thus allowing for the possibility of ‘appropriate’ institutional care.

It is notable that the impetus for the classification of people with mental handicap originated from what was considered to be essential humanitarian concerns. However, this classification also served to stereotype and couple mental handicap to other racist formulations of the ‘common good’ in ways that had dire consequences for its future development in South Africa. In 1912, Huey (for the US) had referred to the ‘feeble-minded’,⁴¹⁰ as those whose:

Presence and conduct subject their families to humiliation; they are an intolerable burden to the teacher and to the schools; they recruit the ranks of criminals, prostitutes, vagrants, almsmakers and the insane.⁴¹¹

Quoting Fernald (1912), Anastasi (1982) similarly referred to the ‘feeble-minded’ as:

A parasitic, predatory class, that is never capable of self-support or managing their own affairs. They cause unutterable sorrow at home and are a menace and a danger to the community.⁴¹²

These descriptions elicit images of people seen to be predominantly ‘morally defective’. Interestingly, from the 1930s moral judgement was deemed to be a direct function of the intellect. A lack of morality was thus regarded as signifying mental deficiency. Similarly, in South Africa from the 1930s, the link that was made between morality and mental deficiency informed the increased attention given to ‘mental deviates’. It was asserted that ‘mental deviates’ represented a formidable danger to society. *The protection of society* thus became directly associated with the need to provide training for the ‘mentally deficient’ in order that they may achieve a particular level of social adaptation. This need to protect society is perhaps best

⁴¹⁰ A Government Commission noted in 1945 that the Mental Disorders Act of 1916 had for the first time legally defined those referred to as ‘mentally defective’ into three groups, namely idiots, imbeciles and the feeble-minded. This chapter focuses on the last group, as only persons from this group could ever end up in industrial schools and reformatories. See Union of South Africa (1945), *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate Children* UG 30-1945, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.6)

⁴¹¹ Huey, EB (1912), *Backward and feeble-minded children: clinical studies in the psychology of defectives, with a syllabus for the clinical examination and testing of children*, (Baltimore, Warwick and York, p.2). As cited by Lea and Foster (1990), p.5

expressed by Mary Stewart (1941) in her booklet, *The Education of the Backward Child: a problem for post-war reconstruction*.

The backward are capable of being trained and educated to become happy and useful members of society, but (they are also) capable if they are not so trained of becoming the misfits, the subhuman failures who form the great recruiting-ground for the Nazis and for gangsters of all types.⁴¹³

Mental handicap was therefore not merely a medical condition that existed independently of the social and political realms of society. Rather, the very concept of mental handicap was inextricably linked to the dominant social, political and professional agendas of modern Western society. The large scale 'regulation' of this group necessitated an active role by the 'modern state' in the promulgation and enactment of laws that would serve to regulate the processes whereby members of this group of children were identified. It also required the use of the services of social workers, psychologists, medical doctors, and educationalists that would execute these regulations. In this way notions like mental handicap became enmeshed not only within the formal structures of society, but was also firmly embedded within the very fabric of existing social and political institutions.

A history of 'mental deficiency' - 'handicap' in South Africa

The focus on those deemed to 'suffer' from mental handicap has always been dominated by themes of social control. For example, the reports of the Commissioner of Mental Hygiene from 1916 to 1932 indicated a focus on social problems like delinquency, prostitution, indigency, alcoholism, youth unemployment, reformatories, juvenile courts etc when addressing the issue of mental 'deficiency'. The main theme of these reports was that 'defectives' constituted a sizeable proportion of the cases that were linked to 'social disorder', and that they had to be tested, recognised, registered and removed.

If defectives were not treated in terms of the 1916 Act (The Mental Disorders Act no 38 of 1916) and remained in a bad environment they would become...more degraded and more useless and swell the ranks of criminal,

⁴¹² Anastasi, A (1982) *Psychological Testing* (5th edition), (New York, Macmillan, p.5-8)

⁴¹³ Stewart, M (1941), *The Education of the Backward Child: a problem for post-war reconstruction* (Fabian Research Series 57)

poor white, inebriate and prostitute classes thus leading to enormous unnecessary expenditure not only by the State, on prisons, mental hospitals, charities but also by the church, public and private charitable organisations⁴¹⁴

Kaplan and Sadock (1981) assert that up to 87% of all people with a mental handicap belong to an elusive category known simply as ‘socio-cultural retardation’ (aka feeble-mindedness). This group, made up mostly of the “indigent, dependent, hopeless, often illiterate, inhabitants of backward rural communities and urban slums”, is most commonly situated within the lowest level of socio-economic status.⁴¹⁵

The Mental Disorders Act no38 of 1916 had focused sharply on this group of ‘feeble-minded’ who required state aid. The 1916 Act defined a ‘feeble-minded’ person as “incapable of competing on equal terms with his normal fellows or of managing himself and his affairs with ordinary prudence. Such a person required care, supervision and control for his own protection or for the protection of others.”⁴¹⁶

That the category ‘feeble-minded’⁴¹⁷ existed just below the threshold of normality and was difficult to diagnose raises many issues related to the mental hygiene movement at the time. Linda Chisholm has argued that ‘feeble-mindedness’ was located at that time in the context of the definition of membership of the group referred to as ‘poor whites’ and the tenuous social position of the ‘white’ working class. The elimination of the feeble-minded, who were believed to be

⁴¹⁴ Union of South Africa (1921), *Report of the Commissioner for Mentally Disordered and Defective Persons* (Cape Town, Government Printer UG 31-21, p.2)

⁴¹⁵ Lea and Foster (1990), p.20

⁴¹⁶ Union of South Africa (1916), *The Mental Disorders Act no 38 of 1916, Section three*, (Pretoria, Government Printer)

⁴¹⁷ In 1928, the Van Schalkwyk Commission asserted that “delinquent tendencies are not confined to children of any particular grade of intelligence. Nevertheless, defective or subnormal mentality is the commonest factor associated with delinquency”. See Van Schalkwyk Commission, p.34

disproportionately concentrated within the ‘white’ poor, was therefore seen as crucial to the future of the ‘white race’.⁴¹⁸

Commissioner for Mental Hygiene for the period 1916-1932, Dr. JT Dunston, believed that the “feeble-minded were socially a very dangerous class, for, being without higher control, they are very easily influenced, and can be used as a tool by anybody.”⁴¹⁹ As the mental impairment of the feeble-minded was not always obvious, feeble-minded children were believed to constitute a particularly insidious threat to the welfare of the ‘healthy’ in society. It was suggested that because the feeble-minded possessed “a measure of intelligence and more especially cunning”, they could quite easily act to the detriment of social order. The feeble-minded were therefore identified as the “prime source of vice, crime and pauperism”. It was asserted that without “expert vigilance, they would easily go undetected and pollute society as a whole with their taint.”⁴²⁰

In his deliberations with the Union Government, Dunston contended that the narrow conception of mental hygiene and the concentration on immediate relief measures would eventually result in “the lowering of the mental and social standards of the nation as a whole with increasing poverty and degeneration.”⁴²¹ He urged that mental hygiene be regarded as a form of “preventative medicine”. This assertion was based on the idea that mental hygiene dealt with all forms of ‘social inadequacy’ including conditions like delinquency, prostitution, alcoholism and dependency, and “could do as much for the betterment of the race as gardening, forestry and animal breeding can do in their respective fields.”⁴²²

⁴¹⁸ Chisholm, L (1989), *Reformatories and Industrial Schools in South Africa: a Study in Class, Colour and Gender, 1882-1939* (Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand: unpublished doctoral dissertation). Also see Dubow (1995), p.147

⁴¹⁹ Union of South Africa (1921), *Report of the Commissioner of Mentally Disordered and Defective Persons for the Union of SA for 1919*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.5)

⁴²⁰ Dubow (1995), p.148

⁴²¹ Union of South Africa (1929), *Report of the Commissioner for Mental Hygiene and Statistical Tables 1926-7*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, UG 25-29, p.iii)

⁴²² Union of South Africa (1929), *Report of the Commissioner for Mental Hygiene and Statistical Tables 1926-7*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, UG 25-29, p.iv)

By seeking to apply scientific principles to the management of society, Dunston, as the modernising psychologist, represented the incremental authority of psychological medicine in the treatment of social problems in South Africa at the time. Dunston asserted in 1929 that the aim of the mental hygiene movement was to develop the abilities of ‘feeble-minded’ children via the forms of instruction and education. For the proper functioning of such a system, however, greater co-ordination was required.

Therefore, when the Mental Disorders Act of 1916 came into operation, ‘mentally defective’ children were distributed amongst various authorities. These included the Union Education Department, which was in control of institutions under the Children’s Protection Act of 1913, the Department of Prisons, which administered reformatories, and the four Provincial Education Departments that, in terms of the Act of Union, were responsible for primary and secondary education.⁴²³

As a result of a meeting between the Union Government and Provincial Administrators in Bloemfontein in September 1918, it was agreed that all children were to be tested and selected for special education. Those children that could not be slotted into the designated programmes of the education, prison or provincial departments were to be transferred to the control of the Commissioner of Hygiene⁴²⁴ and placed in designated ‘mental’ institutions. In 1920 this agreement was amended. It was tentatively agreed that the Union Government would be solely responsible for all ‘mentally defective’ children under the Children’s Protection Act and the Reformatories Act. The Union Government also agreed to be responsible for other ‘mentally defective’ children when the Provinces contributed towards their ‘cost’. This allowed for the Department of the Interior (Mental Hygiene) to play a

⁴²³ As a result of this division of responsibility, the Union Education Department, within its own department, sought to ‘re-organise’ its services to children with ‘mental handicap’ from 1921, and apply greater and more stringent classification within its reformatory and industrial school system. See Union of South Africa (1945), *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate Children* UG 30-1945, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.6)

⁴²⁴ The Department of Mental Hygiene was a sub-department of the Department of the Interior and offered separate institutional facilities for ‘mentally defective’ children, such as the Alexandra

far more active role in preventative work in mental hygiene. From 1923 this department focused on providing psychological services to schools, clinics, juvenile affairs boards and juvenile courts, as well as to child welfare and similar societies whose work brought them into contact with the problems of mental hygiene. As a result of the adoption of this policy, valuable services were rendered to schools (amongst others) in connection with the clinical treatment and examination of pupils, as well as with intelligence surveys.

From 1923, these services rendered to educational authorities had greatly contributed towards clarifying and highlighting the problem of ‘mental’ and ‘behavioural’ disabilities in school-going children in South Africa.

It is also significant that the struggle for special education did not only take place at the state-formal-institutional level. Child welfare and mental hygiene societies, teacher associations and organisations for the blind, as well as juvenile affairs boards, all made strong recommendations to the authorities.⁴²⁵ These organisations were all quite concerned that the Union authorities make suitable provision of facilities and ‘expertise’ for the education of mentally handicapped or ‘backward’ children. In fact, a study by one such organisation, the Witwatersrand Central Juvenile Affairs Board, served to inform the decision by the Minister of Education and Interior to appoint the Inter-Departmental Committee on Mental Deficiency in 1928. The study of a sub-committee of the Juvenile Affairs Board had asserted that many “unemployed girls and boys on the Rand could not be placed in employment on account of physical, mental and behavioural defects”. The Committee had also argued that the “unsuitability of the children for employment was not so much to be attributed to these handicaps as to the school system which had failed to identify and treat the defects, and to develop the residual capacities of the pupils.”⁴²⁶

Institute at Maitland (established in 1921) and the Witrand Institute at Potchefstroom (established in 1923).

⁴²⁵ UG 30-1945, p.8

⁴²⁶ UG 30-1945, p.9

This development also informed the passing of the Vocational Education and Special Schools Act No.29 of 1928. The latter Act defined special schools as schools for physically defective children, and for mentally defective or subnormal children not certifiable under the Mental Disorders Act, but ‘incapable’ of benefiting from education and training at ordinary schools.

Subsequently, for the first time, a classification of the different groups of mentally handicapped children emerged, namely ‘supernormal’, ‘normal’, ‘backward’ and ‘very backward’, ‘feeble-minded’, ‘imbeciles’ and ‘idiots’. The feeble-minded were further sub-divided into (a) those presumed to be feeble-minded, (b) those that had been diagnosed as such, and (c) those that were certifiable. Under the 1928 Act, the Union Education Department became solely responsible for those *diagnosed* to be feeble-minded.⁴²⁷

Furthermore, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Mental Deficiency (the Van Schalkwyk Commission) asserted in 1928 that the problem of psychopathic and problem children needed to be addressed at the level of the ordinary school. The Committee noted that the relationship of problem children to juvenile delinquency could best be detected at the local level, where “defects of behaviour were deemed to manifest themselves in their most incipient stage.”⁴²⁸ It therefore recommended the extension and improvement of the *system of school medical inspection services* for the purpose of increasing the opportunities for the development of mentally handicapped pupils.

Yet, by 1935 this envisaged system of special education had not materialised. Notwithstanding the identification of 30,144 ‘european’ subnormal children by the Van Schalkwyk Committee in 1928, the Secretary of Education reported in 1935 that there were only educational facilities for 1,672 in Provincial and about 400 in

⁴²⁷ The Provinces were to be responsible for the first three groups, as well as those *presumed* to be feeble-minded, the UED as above, and the Department of Interior for the rest. The Commissioner of Mental Hygiene was also responsible for the keeping of a register of all feeble-minded children in Provincial and Union Education Department schools. See UG 30-1945, p.9

⁴²⁸ UG 30-1945, p.10

Union schools. The reason given for the central government not having provided further facilities was that it was both impracticable and undesirable at the time to remove certain types of handicapped children from ordinary schools.

From 1937 however, once the problem of administrative responsibility had been resolved, and a greater injection of funds into special education had been secured, the recognition and extension of special education subsequently centred on the problem of suitable educational facilities for 'mentally handicapped' children. As the Head of the Education Department for the Cape Province noted in 1937:

The passing of legislation by Parliament and the Provincial Council, as well as the additional grant by the Union Government, has enabled the Department to make a system of special education the definite policy throughout the Province.⁴²⁹

At this stage in the development of policy towards mentally handicapped children, provisions were solely *limited to 'european' children*. The continued interest of the Union Government after 1937 in the field of mental health was then further indicated by the appointment of *the Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate Children* in 1945. The Report of the Committee comprised of two parts, the first of which was published in 1945 and the second in 1950. The first report focused on 'european' deviate children. The second report that was published five years later in 1950 focused on 'non-european' children.

The Role of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate (European) Children of 1945

Significantly in 1945, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate Children reported that while much progress had taken place in the field of special education, much work still needed to be done.

- (a) It was required that educational facilities be extended to those groups of handicapped children for whom then-existing provision was inadequate, especially those children not resident in the large cities;
- (b) Organised measures to discover children in need of special education were required;

⁴²⁹ Cited in UG 30-1945, p.11

(c) Medical and related services needed to be extensively used in dealing, in a preventative way in the first instance, with the problem of physical and mental handicaps;

(d) More stringent measures needed to be adopted to ensure that handicapped children were placed in suitable employment after leaving school.⁴³⁰

The Committee had therefore been directed to indicate the direction that would guide the further development of special education. One of the important differences for the committee was that it, for the first time, was instructed to determine the number of ‘european’ as well as ‘non-european’ children. The children needed to be between the ages of three and nineteen years, and had to be suffering from defects “which necessitated the provision of training that would lead to their re-adjustment to society.”⁴³¹

Until this time the “focus of attention on ‘mental defectives’ was restricted to ‘whites’, and was linked quite closely, both ideologically and practically, to the ‘poor white’ issue which took centre stage as a social problem in the 1920s and 1930s. In this respect, the process of mental health racialisation became entrenched during this period.”⁴³²

Nonetheless, while it is important to observe that the racialisation of mental health occurred alongside the move away from earlier notions of mentally handicapped persons (in the 1920s) as malicious, evil and potentially criminal, this development served only to de-stigmatise ‘white’ deviants. The Van Schalkwyk Commission stressed that the behaviour of the behaviourally handicapped was (to some extent) “a reflection of his inward mental organisation, which was essentially governed by hereditary and environmental factors, and that the most frequent single factor in delinquency remained mental subnormality and defect”.⁴³³ In so doing, the

⁴³⁰ UG 30-1945, p.14

⁴³¹ UG 30-1945, p.14. The Report was published in two volumes, one for ‘european’ children in 1945 and one for ‘non-european’ children in 1950.

⁴³² Lea & Foster (1990), p.41; The Government Report of 1928 asserted that the “european subnormal formed a substantial part of (what was deemed) the lower social and economic strata of the civilised society, which was expected to withstand the penetration of the best elements of the uncivilised race”. See G68 E Educ 1/28, p.192

⁴³³ G68 E Educ 1/28, p.179

Commission of 1928 served to establish the conditions that in later years, with the aid of the mental testing movement, led to large numbers of ‘coloured’ children being ‘committed’ to industrial schools and other state institutional facilities.

The Special Schools Act no9 of 1948 subsequently defined the ‘mentally handicapped child’ as the child:

Who, in the opinion of a head of department, is capable of deriving appreciable benefit from a suitable course of instruction, but deviates to such an extent from the majority of children in body mind and behaviour, that he (1) cannot derive sufficient benefit from the instruction normally received in the ordinary course of education, or (2) requires special education in order to facilitate his adaptation to the community, or (3) should not attend an ordinary class in an ordinary school because such attendance may be harmful to himself or to the other pupils in the class.⁴³⁴

This definition served to include mechanisms that identified within the broader school-going population (for testing and classification) those who required special education. In this period the outbreak of the Second World War greatly curtailed much of the ‘constructive action’ that had gained momentum by the late 1930s. The *1945 Report on Deviate Children* served therefore to re-focus state mental health policy on those children defined as ‘*subnormals*’ with an IQ of between 50 and 80.⁴³⁵ Henceforth, most of the state’s *mental health* facilities and attention were geared towards this constituency.

⁴³⁴ Union of South Africa (1948), *Special Schools Act No.9 of 1948*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.50)

⁴³⁵ This was based on the categories (8 categories) used by the Van Schalkwyk Commission of 1930.

<i>category</i>	<i>Q range</i>	<i>category</i>	<i>Q range</i>
1. idiots	below 25	5. dull normal	90-99
2. imbeciles	25-49	6. average	100-109
3. Feeble-minded	50-74	7. bright	110-119
4. subnormal	75-89	8. talented genius	over 120

The lack of attention to the more severely handicapped remained a feature of state policy until the 1970s. The severely handicapped generally remained under the control of large asylum-model institutions.

The 'subnormal' and the 'behavioural deviate'

Until 1945 'non-european' handicapped children were thoroughly neglected. On the one hand, this was partly due to the belief by many health care professionals at the time that 'non-whites' were inferior and therefore did not warrant attention. On the other hand, state policy had concentrated solely on the 'lifting up' and 'salvation' of 'poor whites'.

From 1945, however, state policy increasingly sought to include the general population. It would seem that by this time 'mental deficiency' had been sufficiently 'medicalised', to allow the authorities to adopt a policy which 'medically treated' the 'different' problems of the 'races'. By then the head of psychology at the National Bureau of Educational and Social Research, Dr. ML Fick, had conclusively claimed that "all objective estimates, whether based on achievement or intelligence tests, indicated a marked inferiority of 'africans' by comparison with 'whites'". Fick asserted that "this inferiority, occurring in certain tests in which learning or environmental conditions are equalised for the 'native' and 'european' groups, does not appear to be of a temporary nature."⁴³⁶

Based on the same premise as that of Chief Inspector of Native Education, Werner Eiselen, when he claimed that "the 'native' was not educable in precisely the same way as the 'european' and that education policies had to be remoulded accordingly,"⁴³⁷ the mental testing movement in the 1940s suggested that mental health be applied differentially to 'non-europeans'.

Whereas poor scores registered by 'blacks' tended to be interpreted in terms of immutable biological heredity, lack of achievement on the part of impoverished 'whites' was most often attributed to environmental-and hence remediable-factors.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁶ Dubow (1995), p.217

⁴³⁷ Fick, ML (1939), *The Educability of the South African Native* (Pretoria, p.56). As cited in Dubow (1995), p.217

⁴³⁸ Dubow (1995), p.223

Therefore, one of the first things that the Report on Deviate Children in 1945 had set about doing was re-interpreting and extending its terms of reference to include what sort of *treatment* should be pursued.

According to the Committee's interpretation of its terms of reference, the emphasis in its investigations should fall primarily on the measures which are regarded as necessary to secure for handicapped children more effective vocational training and to facilitate their absorption and adjustment in the labour market. Since this applies to children who are suffering from physical and mental, including behavioural, handicaps, it is indicated that the investigation should also cover the field of medical and mental treatment.⁴³⁹

After 1945, treatment became a fundamental aspect of special education. As treatment was regarded as the first and most important measure of combating the problem of physical and mental disabilities, it was felt necessary to *compel* handicapped children to attend special schools. Legislation was therefore required which would also compel parents to comply with state orders when a child was found to be 'handicapped'.

Significantly, from 1945 the state provided far more comprehensively for the special education and care of handicapped children in South Africa. By this time, provision and facilities had been made available quite extensively for the mental examination and treatment of school-going children.

Behavioural Deviates

Until 1945, statutory provisions determined that children that were definitely troublesome or uncontrollable, or criminal, were to be dealt with in terms of the Children's Act, and thus be assigned to the central authority with a view to their re-education. Generally, teachers in 'normal' schools were not included in the treatment of uncontrollable and maladjusted children.

A behaviour problem child was one who was deemed to:

On account of innate disposition or on account of incorrect education, conceptions and ideals, and the formation of bad habits, exhibit in his behaviour aberrations from the socially accepted standard, which obstruct his progress at school and his adjustment within the community, and which, in

⁴³⁹ UG 30-1945, p.2

the absence of suitable treatment, may possibly lead to maladjustment (including crime) in the community as a whole. This definition includes two aspects of behaviour

(a) Where the behaviour deviates often and conspicuously from the standard laid down by society, and consequently causes conflicts between the individual and other people in his environment; and

(b) Where the behaviour discloses personality attitudes which deviate strikingly from the type of behaviour generally accepted as sound for a particular age, e.g the extreme daydreamer.

“A child who cannot properly adjust himself in society creates problems for himself and for those with whom he comes into contact.”⁴⁴⁰

At that time, the maladjustment of children was regarded as a significant national problem. This assertion was based on the observation that “children committed via the Children’s Act included those whose misbehaviour had not brought them into conflict with the law, but which created serious behaviour problems for themselves, their parents, their teachers and the community”.⁴⁴¹

Based on the ‘advances’ in the development of professional treatment, the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate Children in 1945 therefore expressed whole-hearted confidence in increasing the role of the ‘expert’:

i) Whatever the cause of the behavioural aberration, the person as well as his behaviour and all incidental circumstances must be carefully *analysed* and *studied* before any conclusions are drawn and decisions made regarding the treatment to be prescribed for a particular deviation....

ii) Preventive measures applied with the best of intentions will not succeed unless they are based on a *thorough and extensive knowledge* of the *psychology* of the *personality* and its adjustment....

iii) To meet with success the treatment will have to be carried out *scientifically* by *specially trained officials* who will study each case separately in order that the most suitable treatment may be prescribed. These *specialists*, who will indicate what the general policy is, must be assisted by persons with a *sound knowledge* of the *psychology of the deviate child*, particularly as regards his adjustment in daily life, because the behavioural aberrations may be a result of physical or mental handicaps.⁴⁴² (my emphases)

⁴⁴⁰ UG 30-1945, p.157. The statutory procedures involved in the committal of the ‘child in need of care’, namely the behaviour-deviant, is dealt with in Section B, Chapter 2.

⁴⁴¹ UG 30-1945, p.158

⁴⁴² UG 30-1945, p.158

However, the 1945 Report also asserted that “the problem of combating behavioural handicaps needed to be entrusted as a definite task to the provincial education authorities. Only then would it be possible to approach it from the preventive angle.” It noted that the legislation focused too sharply on the end product, instead of giving provincial authorities the power to intervene and “take suitable and timely preventive measures while the behaviour was still in its initial stages”.⁴⁴³

The Inter-Departmental Committee contended that:

The great majority of persons affected by the Children’s Act are children attending provincial schools. More thorough preventive work (by ordinary schools) will address those behavioural aberrants who evade the demands of their environment by withdrawal or escape from reality and by regression, introversion and fantasy. Such cases do not experience to the full their impulses and desires, but attempt to realise them by less than satisfying means such as constant daydreaming and so forth.⁴⁴⁴

The Committee thus recommended (in the 1945 Report):

That the matter should be approached more deliberately from the preventive point of view, by moving the focal point in the consideration of this problem from the central government to the authority entrusted with the instruction of these children during those years when the unfavourable behaviour symptoms manifest themselves for the first time. If this is carried out, the number of children sent to reformatories, industrial schools and other institutions in terms of the provisions of the Children’s Act, will in future decrease considerably.⁴⁴⁵

This envisaged preventive programme was deemed to require:

- (a) Nursery schools as an integral part of the education system;
- (b) Visiting teachers as part of the teaching establishment of the province;
- (c) Clinics for mental hygiene as part of the therapeutic services of the educational system; “Itinerant psychologists may in co-operation with a medical inspector of schools or a local doctor provide clinical guidance and treatment in areas with no access to mental hygiene clinics; Universities and university colleges in co-operation with the education departments could also render useful clinical services”;
- (d) Special schools.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴³ UG 30-1945, p.163

⁴⁴⁴ UG 30-1945, p.164

⁴⁴⁵ UG 30-1945, P.164

⁴⁴⁶ UG 30-1945, p.165. Also see Hay, A (1991), *A History of the UCT Child Guidance Clinic*, (UCT, unpublished Masters dissertation)

Thus far, this chapter has sought to show that by focusing on the ‘mental handicaps’ of children in South Africa, the Union Government (aggressively) sought to incorporate all children prone to ‘backwardness’ or ‘abnormal’ behaviour in state programmes, whether in ‘normal’ schools or outside school. The movement to address the ‘problem’ of ‘mental handicap’ was broad and wide-ranging and was not confined to the ‘feeble-minded’ or the ‘subnormal’ children that were ‘committed’ to industrial schools and reformatories at that time.

Special Education after 1945

Little had changed by 1945 with regard to the ways in which social policy dealt with children. Children had become mere figures in that familiar landscape of adult reform programmes. At this time the influence of ‘scientific knowledge’ on the formulation of state social policy served however to place a renewed focus on the needs of children. By 1945 a number of contradictions within policy relating to children had been resolved through the ‘progressive’ intervention of education and the mental hygiene approach of the child guidance movement, which provided the opportunity for a new and deeper dimension to the design and objectives of social policy to emerge. This essentially involved greater attention being given to the familial context of the child. The experience of the Second World War then dramatised for many social reformers the existence of the slum child (and family) with its frail ‘diseased-racked’ body and ‘emotionally-disturbed’ mind.

Most importantly, the politics of the 1940s, with its emphasis on the democratisation of citizenship and the right of all citizens to social and health services, served to focus efforts of social reformers, politicians and professionals on how they would construct new structures of administration in this changing environment.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁷ George Gale noted in 1946 that “(the new approach) to health care was entirely different because it placed in the field not an individual medical practitioner, but a whole team that was trained to observe, in the homes of the people, the environmental, including the social, factors that were working for or against health. These they record, and the record is available to the team at the health centre when dealing with individuals from these homes”. These health centres could then prompt research into the social causes of disease. See Gale, G (1946), *The South African Medical Journal*, June 1946, p.326. As cited in Shula Marks and Neil Andersson (1992), ‘Industrialisation, Rural

Special Education: changing contexts

It is important to recognise that in South Africa in the 1940s there were trends within South African politics that were attempting to appropriate some of these powerful international discourses. Linked to the ‘scientific discourse’ of mental hygiene was an approach that assumed the virtue and inevitability of a particular kind of modern society emerging at that time both locally and internationally. The ontology of this project was not only that it was a ‘progressive’ movement, but also that it was the only possible movement forward. A set of assumptions emerged at that time that took for granted notions like growth, capitalism, urbanisation, consumerism, increased productivity, peace, greater work ethics, and humaneness. These aspects were significant parts of the social policies of many countries in North America and Europe at that time, which sought to develop notions of macro-planning and ‘universal government’.

In this regard, the motives of the United Party in adopting many of the approaches of the international community were clearly ambiguous and contradictory. It may well be however that the United Party simply believed that these ‘new ideas’ were the only ideas that could be used in solving some of the social problems that they were faced with at that time.

In the 1940s the desire to deal with the ‘needs’ of children raised many dilemmas for policy makers. It is significant that after the end of the Second World War the development of a new relationship between the State and the family, with the focus on keeping the family together at all costs, was addressed in the context of many social, political and economic constraints. Issues of ‘race’, administrative ability, economic prowess, citizen eligibility and the specific needs of social order, all directly impacted on the direction of social policy.

Health, and the 1944 National Health Services Commission in South Africa’, in Feierman, S & Janzen, JM (eds), *The Social Basis of Health and Healing in Africa*, (Oxford, University of California Press, p.156). For a discussion of the English experience, see Hendrick (1994), p.211

At the time, there were four further reasons that can also explain why the family (that lived in urban areas) came to be seen as so necessary for the effective care of children. Firstly, there was a growing concern about the reproductive rate of the 'civilised' population. The State increasingly sought to institute programmes that focused on families and their mental and medical health. Special services for mother and child, in the form of maintenance grants, child grants, foster care, and adoption, also assumed far greater emphasis.

Secondly, the history and experience of providing public childcare had revealed the need for more personalised care of individual children and a focus on their 'healthy' emotional development. "Psychological tests had shown that in the absence of personal affection, children exhibited an almost pathological clamouring for attention and petting."⁴⁴⁸

Thirdly, in the period preceding the 1940s, several interwoven developments had taken place that placed greater emphasis on child guidance and the role of psychological knowledge in the treatment of children and young adolescents. Interest in the psychological condition of children thus reinforced the idea of a properly functioning family.

And fourthly, the impact of the Second World War, which 'encouraged' rapid migration to the cities, contributed to the growing concept of 'the problem family' that had failed to maintain adequate standards of childcare. While parents were generally condemned for their 'failures', it was believed that with better social services and financial aid through welfare grants, parents (especially mothers) could be helped towards 'responsible' and 'mature' behaviour.

In a direct attack on the problems of 'want', 'disease', 'squalor', 'ignorance' and 'idleness', it was increasingly believed that social security, employment

⁴⁴⁸ Hendrick (1994), p.220

opportunities, family allowances, and health services would help individuals to become citizens of the community (again).⁴⁴⁹

Up to 1945, all efforts to provide these services had been directed only towards 'whites'. However, with the rapid increase in urban populations in the 1940s (especially the 'non-white' sector), the Union Government came under enormous pressure to extend some of these services to the rest of the population. It was acknowledged at that time that public childcare was much more complex than had been appreciated, and that the children from 'problem families' required long term preventive aid. It was argued that the issues 'within the family' and 'within the psyche of the child' needed to be attached to problems associated with 'social disorder'. In this regard, it is significant that the 'desire' to provide much-needed welfare and mental health services for 'non-white' children emerged in a climate of 'fear' of 'social chaos'. Increasingly, the focus fell on the need for society to protect itself from the juvenile delinquents that were plaguing the urban environment. The link made in the 1930s⁴⁵⁰ between poverty/deprivation and deprivation thence reasserted itself within policy. Only, in this period, the new category of 'problem families', 'problem children'⁴⁵¹, as well as the recognition of the impact of separating children from their social environments, provided a much more 'informed' perspective for politicians, social theorists and social workers when they sought to deal with the poverty/delinquency dialectic.

⁴⁴⁹ At a conference in Port Elizabeth in 1949, the Medical Superintendent of Tara Hospital in Johannesburg, H Moross, asserted that it was increasingly "being realised that the responsibility for the promotion of the health of the society must be shared by its medical services and its social practitioners, which are the educationalist, industrialist, the psychologist, the politician (national and local), the theologian and other leaders of the community." See Moross, H (1949), 'Social erosion and the promotion of Mental Health', in the *Report of the Annual Meeting of the South African National Council for Mental Health, Johannesburg, Oct 1949*, p.2

⁴⁵⁰ It was asserted in 1937 that neglect generally led to delinquency, and delinquency was encouraged by neglect (that neglect and delinquency were intertwined). Union of South Africa (1937), *The Children's Act of 1937*, (Pretoria, Government Printer)

⁴⁵¹ Moross asserted in 1949 that "a high proportion of the neuroses, *delinquencies, petty crimes, general maladaptations*, escape to alcohol, drug addiction, and the country's high divorce rate can be traced back to factors primarily rooted in the *quality and impact of community life (my emphasis)*". See Moross, H (1949), p.1

From the 1950s the main focus in terms of child-care policy was not on the prevention or the ‘protection’ of the cruelty and neglect of children, but rather on the ‘scientific links’ that were being made between juvenile delinquency and social disorder. Given the political situation in South Africa at the time, this emphasis within child-care policy took on rather different forms for ‘race-designated’ groups.

Special Education for ‘non-europeans’

By 1945 very limited facilities existed for ‘non-europeans’ with regard to addressing their ‘social needs’ in relation to their mental health. Provision for ‘non-european’ ‘deviate’ children in State or State-aided institutions at the time was⁴⁵²:

Nature of defect	Institution	‘Racial’ group
(a) Sight	Athlone School for the Blind, Bellville	‘coloureds’, ‘indians’, ‘natives’
(b) Hearing	(1) School for Deaf children, Worcester	‘coloureds’, ‘indians’, ‘natives’
	(2) Dominican School for Deaf, Wittebome	‘coloureds’, ‘indians’, ‘natives’
	(3) Kutlwanong Institute for Deaf-mutes, Roodepoort	‘natives’
(c) Epileptics	NO PROVISION	
(d) Cripples	(1) Princess Alice Home of Recovery, Cape Town	‘coloureds’, ‘natives’
	(2) Lady Michaelis Home, Cape Town	‘coloureds’, ‘indians’, ‘natives’
	(3) Garden Village Home, Cape Town	‘coloureds’, ‘indians’, ‘natives’
	(4) St Joseph’s Home, Cape Town	‘coloureds’, ‘indians’, ‘natives’
(e) Speech	NO PROVISION	
(f) <i>Behaviour</i>	<u>Under the Control of the Union Education Department</u>	
	(1) Diepkloof Reformatory	‘natives’
	(2) Porter Reformatory	‘coloureds’
	(3) Eshowe Reformatory	‘coloureds’, ‘indians’, ‘natives’ (all girls)
	(4) Ottery Industrial School	‘coloureds’

⁴⁵² See the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate Non-European Children of 1945 (AN 792-1950)

Under the Control of the Department
of Social Welfare

(5) Boy's Hostel, Motala	'indians'
(6) Gompo Institute, East London	'natives'
(7) Mountain View Hostel, Retreat	'coloureds'
(8) Lungalegwaba Hostel, Johannesburg	'natives'
(9) Mtutuzele Rescue Home, Orlando	'coloureds', 'indians', 'natives'
(10) Martindale Girl's Hostel, Sophiatown, Johannesburg	mostly 'natives'
(11) Talitha Home, Sophiatown, JB	'natives'
(12) Wierda 'Native' Hostel, Pretoria	'natives'
(13) Brandon 'bantú' Hostel, Durban	'natives'

Don Foster has argued that the chief strategy of the Union Government, as well as that of most voluntary welfare and mental-care bodies, until that time had been focused on the upliftment of 'poor whites'. He further notes that very little changed until the 1960s, when there was a flurry of legislation for the provision of special education for 'non-european' children. This development in the 1960s occurred in the context of the separate provision of social services for the various 'race groups'. In the period 1955 to 1964, much of the strategy of the Apartheid Government was to establish separate bodies to administer to the needs of the various 'race-designated groups'. In this regard, various laws were passed for the separate groups, namely the Coloured Persons Education Act no 47 of 1963, the Bantu Special Education Act no24 of 1964, and the Indian's Education Act no 61 of 1965. Foster contends that the 1950s was a quiet decade in terms of changing and improving the lot of persons with mental handicap and suggests that 'nothing (or very little) happened' in terms of special education provision for 'non-whites' in this period:

Whether this was due to the aftermath of war ('the silent generation'), or due to the massive effort on the part of the state to create apartheid, or the fact that fundamental controls for mentally handicapped persons were substantially in place even if not fully effected, is not entirely clear.⁴⁵³

However, given the greater emphasis within the mental health movement at the time on 'mild retardation' or 'subnormality', it is not surprising that mental health

facilities were not provided after 1948. In that period the ‘mental health problems’ of ‘non-whites’ were clearly linked to the ‘social disorder anxieties’ of the emerging modern society. Ideas of how to address the needs of ‘non-whites’ were as such unformed.

The 1945 Report⁴⁵⁴ had noted that as regards the ‘non-european’, several problems had to be faced, the most difficult of which was thought to be the collection of reliable data regarding the number of deviates for whom provision had to be made. Therefore, one of the first issues that the 1945 Report (vol II)⁴⁵⁵ addressed was how to go about doing this. This concern was based on two perceptions; namely that

- (a) “Two of the three non-European groups, the Indians and the Natives, have each its own social system and attitudes towards life, which was different to that of the third group, Coloureds, which belonged to *western civilisation*”; (my emphasis) and that
- (b) In the absence of compulsory education for Non-Europeans, it was going to be difficult to assess the nature of this ‘need’.⁴⁵⁶

While the Committee could not foresee the establishment of a comprehensive programme of special education for ‘non-europeans’, it nevertheless recognised the need to ‘prioritise’ the provision of facilities for:

- 1) Deviates totally incapable of fending for themselves (cripples, the deaf, the blind, epileptics);
- 2) Deviates considered a “danger to society through their misbehaviour”.⁴⁵⁷

Based on these concerns, quite different approaches were taken when facilities were subsequently provided. In the case of ‘natives’, efforts were made to provide for children who “suffered on account of blindness, deafness or epilepsy or any other physical defect. No provision was made for ‘native’ children deemed to ‘suffer’ from ‘mild mental handicap’⁴⁵⁸. This exclusion from ‘mental’ or ‘behavioural’ care was based on two things; namely:

⁴⁵³ Lea and Foster (1990), p.56

⁴⁵⁴ UG 30-1945 (An 115-1946/7)

⁴⁵⁵ Union Of South Africa (1945), *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee On Deviate Children (Non-European)* - (hereafter *UG30-1945 AN 792-1950*), (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.142)

⁴⁵⁶ *UG30-1945 AN 792-1950*, p.143

⁴⁵⁷ *UG30-1945 AN 792-1950*, p.143

⁴⁵⁸ See *Bantu Special Education Act no 24 of 1964* that expressly *excluded* mention of any ‘mental’ or ‘behavioural’ deviation. At the time ‘behavioural’ disorder was primarily associated with being a ‘danger to society through bad behaviour’. Prisons were the primary (and only?) means of dealing

- 1) Their mostly non-urban location - believed important in relation to delinquency; and
- 2) They were deemed ‘uneducable’, ‘untrainable’ and therefore in terms of mental hygiene, ‘incurable’.⁴⁵⁹

‘Coloureds’, on the other hand, were regarded as belonging to ‘western civilisation’ and were regarded as mostly urban dwellers. It was also numerically possible to subject them to surveys, so important in scientific and medical programmes. This signalled a significant development with regard to future facilities for ‘coloured’ and ‘indian’ children.

In the case of the ‘european’ volume of the report in 1945, surveys had been undertaken with the assistance of the teachers in ‘white’ schools. When addressing the needs of ‘coloured’ and ‘indian’ children in 1950, it was decided however to make use only of the medical staffs of the different provincial education departments.⁴⁶⁰ This more scientific approach served to subject ‘coloured’ and

with this ‘condition’ amongst ‘africans’. Only in 1979, with the Education and Training Act no 90 of 1979, was special education for ‘african’ mentally handicapped children introduced. Also, in relation to physical defect, “only children *with easily detectable defects* were included”. Because the state was not willing to provide the means to test vision and hearing in ‘native’ children, only those with obvious defects in terms of blindness, deafness and epilepsy, were addressed. See *UG30-1945 An 792-1950*, p.2

⁴⁵⁹ Jock McCulloch notes that while asylums and mental institutions in colonial Africa never quite played the same role ascribed to parallel institutions in Europe, they certainly did serve the interests of the medical profession; that although psychiatry was a backwater, the expansion of its domain helped immeasurably to increase the power of physicians by giving them exclusive competence in dealing with ‘mental illness’. McCulloch highlights the role of J.C. Carothers (1953), *The African Mind in Health and Disease*, (Geneva, World Health Organisation) in the development of the term ethnopsychiatry, which was used in the 1950s to ‘explain’ ‘african’ backwardness’. Ethnopsychiatry also sought to show links between criminality and ‘African’ ‘culture’ and ‘personality’. See McCulloch, J (1995), *Colonial Psychiatry and the ‘African mind’*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p.44-45). Megan Vaughan also argues that the languages of psychology and psychiatry described illness associated with mental health largely in terms of ‘racial’ and cultural difference. “‘The African’ in the twentieth century, like the European woman in the nineteenth century, was (thought to be) simply *not equipped* to cope with ‘civilisation’ (p.107)”. See Vaughan, M (ed) (1991), *Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness*, (London, Polity Press, pp.107)

⁴⁶⁰ Concerning ‘africans’, the committee approached the Department of Native Affairs, which availed itself of headmen, ministers and ‘native’ teachers to oversee and conduct surveys in the Transkei (preliminary ‘test site’). These persons did not fill out the survey forms however. They were not considered capable, nor dependable, and ‘merely’ facilitated the bringing of deviate children and their ‘data’ to magistrates offices which oversaw the completion of the documents. It was

‘indian’ children to far greater ‘surveillance’, since it was now possible to ‘objectify’ findings about them. It also served to indicate the type of ‘support’ that the State envisaged for these groups.

Special Education for ‘coloureds’ and ‘indians’

Given that the main focus of the mental health movement in South Africa during the 1940s and 1950s was on the nature of the ‘feeble-minded’ or ‘subnormal’ child,⁴⁶¹ it is then not surprising that the extension of special education to ‘coloureds’ and ‘indians’ from 1947-1965 focused essentially on providing institutions like reformatories and industrial schools for the ‘behavioural deviates’ of these two groups.⁴⁶²

In the case of ‘coloureds’ (as compared to the provision of industrial schools for ‘whites’) however, the ideology of the reclamation and rehabilitation of the ‘problem family’ existed alongside ‘racist’ notions of ‘criminological’ and mental defect; “that ‘coloureds’ constituted a naturally thieving community.”⁴⁶³ Until the late 1940s and early 1950s, the causation of crime had broadly been seen in terms of cultural, economic and personal factors (although behavioural characteristics were essentially taken for granted), and no real attempts had really been made to link ‘blackness’ with an innate predisposition towards criminality or deviance.⁴⁶⁴ From the 1950s, however, alongside the concentration on behavioural deviates by the mental health movement, a much more systematic attempt was made to observe the ‘pathology’ of society through the prism of hereditarian theories of crime.

subsequently recommended that “as regards the ‘natives’, it is only through protracted ‘professional’ research on a country-wide basis which will in any measure determine the extent of deviation under each of the categories”. See UG 30-1945 AN 792-1950, p.1-2 and p.142

⁴⁶¹ Lea and Foster (1990), p.56

⁴⁶² Practitioners were also preoccupied in the 1950s with devising mechanisms of how best to test ‘subnormality’ among these groups. In the 1950 Report it was contended that because of the absence of standardised tests for ‘non-europeans’, no reliable survey (and thus no facilities) could be initiated for ‘non-white’ ‘mental deviates’. See UG 30-1945 An 792-1950, p.142

⁴⁶³ Chisholm, L (1989), p.167-8

⁴⁶⁴ Dubow (1995), p.156; Also see Union of South Africa (1947), *Report of the Penal and Prison Reform Commission of 1947-(The Lansdown Commission)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.8)

The 1945 survey of 'coloured' and 'indian' children

Based on the findings of the *Commission of Enquiry into the Cape Coloured Population in the Union (the Wilcocks Report of 1937)*, the 1945 Report asserted that the incidence of juvenile delinquency amongst 'coloureds' was the highest in the world. "It followed therefore that the extent of behavioural deviation amongst 'coloureds' was also high."⁴⁶⁵ The Committee was consequently so concerned with the gravity of this problem amongst 'coloureds' that it recommended that even stronger measures be taken with 'coloured' children to address their 'maladjustment'. With regard to 'indians', it was felt that because there was a small number of 'indian' delinquents, they could easily be accommodated at the 'coloured' Porter Reformatory or the Ottery School of Industries. Only one institution was therefore provided in the 1940s for behaviourally deviate 'indian' children, namely the Motala Home for Boys at Pinetown.⁴⁶⁶

Nonetheless, the 1945 Report did observe that most behaviourally deviate 'non-european' children had to come into conflict with society before they could be sent to an institution where they could be trained via the vocational education system. This was linked to the lack of:

- (a) An effective system of education for 'non-europeans',
- (b) General compulsory school attendance,
- (c) Reasonably adequate medical and clinical services,
- (d) Well-trained staff,
- (e) Reasonably adequate school accommodation for children already at school,
- (f) An effective system of leisure time activities under the control of 'non-europeans',
- (g) A general improvement in the socio-economic conditions of 'non-europeans'.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ UG 30-1945 An 792-1950, p.151. Also see UG 30-1945 An 115-1946/7, chapter 8 on 'european' behaviour deviate children

⁴⁶⁶ The Union Education Department asserted in 1948 that "until 1946 male 'indian' pupils committed to reformatories were sent to Diepkloof Reformatory School which caters primarily for 'natives'. As it was felt that 'asiatics' should more 'appropriately' be treated in an institution for 'coloureds', they have been transferred to Porter Reformatory School near Cape Town". See Union of South Africa (1948), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department Calendar Years 1946-7 UG 41/1948*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.17)

⁴⁶⁷ UG 30-1945, p.6

The Non-European Report of 1950 was concerned that the only facilities for the education and treatment of behavioural deviates amongst the 'coloured' population were those provided in the institutions erected under the Children's Act of 1937, namely industrial schools and reformatories. Later, in the 1950s, great emphasis was placed on also providing child guidance facilities to 'coloured' schools in an effort to identify early those 'maladjusted behavioural deviates'.⁴⁶⁸

It was also noted that should 'other' special education be for 'coloured' children, it would need to be done *gradually* and on a *voluntary* basis. This was based on a number of factors.

- (a) It was argued that the high costs of special education would probably be carried out at the cost of the education of the 'normal' 'coloured' child;
- (b) It had to be taken into consideration that large numbers of 'non-european' children were not at school, and that the State did not possess the means or the staff to the meet the full needs of 'normal' children.

Nonetheless, the Report contended that the 'defective' 'coloured' child merited greater care from the State, and that the normal 'coloured' child could easily make his/her way through the world without too much assistance.⁴⁶⁹

*Facts, figures and procedures*⁴⁷⁰

The Committee reported that the number of 'coloured' children enrolled in schools in the Union in 1945 was 172,900 out of a population of 245,600 children in the 6-

⁴⁶⁸ In an interview with JC Carstens, an ex-principal of Ottery Industrial School (1968-1979) and a departmental inspector-psychologist for 'coloured' schools in the 1950s, he noted that he had conducted clinics at a chosen local 'coloured' school at least once a week in the 1950s. Children (and their parents) would come to the clinic from all over that district for assessment and advice on problems of uncontrollability, 'day-dreaming' and 'general naughtiness'. See Interview with JC Carstens, 23 January 1999. Also, by 1955 Valkenberg Hospital was providing weekly out-patient clinics at rooms of the Mental Health Society, psychiatric services to the Courts, and conducted similar work for inmates of Work Colonies and local gaols. Medical staff of the Department also did 'psychiatric' work for the Child Welfare Society, and the Educational Departments, both Union and provincial. See Union of South Africa (1955), *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Mental Hygiene for 1953-UG 26/1955* (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.7).

⁴⁶⁹ UG 30-1945 An 792-1950, p.143

⁴⁷⁰ It is significant that a trained 'medical' staff conducted the surveys that were done on 'coloured' and 'indian' children. Because of the 'scientific' nature of this procedure, the data obtained was generally regarded as more reliable than the data obtained for 'european' deviates. UG 30-1945 An 792-1950, p.149

16 age group.⁴⁷¹ The number of ‘indian’ children in school for the same age group was 41,500 out of a population of 81,700 children.⁴⁷² The Inter-Departmental Committee of 1945 (1950) asserted that the incidence of physical defects (13,089 and 2,016) among these groups was high in proportion to the number that were at school (and especially when compared to figures for ‘european’ children). It argued though that the problem concerning lack of facilities could easily be resolved if a policy were adopted whereby different ‘racial’ groups were accommodated in separate institutions. Thus, for example, “were the few blind ‘native’ children at the Athlone School for the Blind removed therefrom, the present needs of ‘coloured’ children with defective vision would temporarily be met.”⁴⁷³

‘Behaviour Deviates’ and the Judicial System

The history of mental handicap in South Africa essentially provides a case study of the medicalisation of a social problem. Via medical means and in the name of health, socially-defined deviant behaviour was increasingly, over the century, transformed into a medical problem, where delinquency was labelled as a ‘sickness’ which required ‘isolation’, ‘regulation’, and ‘modification’.

That does not suggest, however, that delinquency became the responsibility of the Department of Health. That was simply not the case. The legal system, through the children’s and juvenile courts, remained the determining body on whether a child was to be institutionalised. Rather, it is argued that through the mechanisms of the juvenile and children’s courts, practices that had hitherto been separate came together. Furthermore, it is asserted that developments in psychology and the

⁴⁷¹ There were thought to be roughly 454,185 ‘coloured’ children in the 0-18 year age group in the Union in 1945.

⁴⁷² This figure is deceptive, since ‘indian’ children in the Cape were included in the ‘coloured’ figures. Also, there were some 700 ‘coloured’ children in the Transvaal (Gauteng) that attended ‘native’ schools. See UG 30-1945 An 792-1950, p.4

⁴⁷³ When this occurred, the Report recommended that future institutions for ‘native’ children be established in ‘native’ areas, such “as the Transkei, Zululand, Northern Transvaal and on the Witwatersrand (only where those ‘natives’ had no other home but city areas)”. See UG 30-1945 An 792-1950, pp.149-154

preponderance of IQ testing from the 1930s served to 'legitimise' the extension (and the intervention) of the judicial principle into the social life of children and their families. From the 1940s, the psychological approach also served to cement the 'concrete' link made between poverty and delinquency, with the firm objective of effectively governing the family through the guidance of its inner relationships and responsibilities.

The Children's Courts and the Juvenile Courts were then regarded as an inherent part of a preventative strategy whereby young people were 'treated' for their disposition that, though non-criminal, was deemed to threaten the 'good order' of society.

Social Pathology and Health in South Africa

From the 1940s, ideas from the criminological school developed by WA Willemse and Geoff Cronje at Pretoria University during the 1930s increasingly found their way into the realms of health care. In fact, WA Willemse's first contribution to criminology, *Constitution-types in Delinquency* in 1932 was the first attempt to investigate the relationship between 'bio-physiological types' (such as the 'feeble-minded') and forms of criminal deviancy. For Willemse it was not enough to explain criminality in terms of unitary biological or physiological types. Rather, he sought to develop typologies which embraced both body types and personality types. Criminology was therefore regarded as a crucial metaphor and indicator of the social health of the country.

Willemse's hereditarian theory of crime and deviance still conceded, though, the impact of environmental agencies. This served to generate a convenient intellectual dualism for him, whereby poor 'afrikaners' could be portrayed as the victims of an unjust social and political system while the social circumstances of poor 'non-europeans' was ascribed to their inherent cultural and biological inferiority.

By identifying ‘racial’ inferiority as the basis of ‘non-european’ criminality, this school of thought sought to ‘show’ deeper ‘organic’ differences between the ‘races’. ‘Non-european’ criminality was therefore seen as a symptom of the lack of an organic community and social solidarity, and reflected an inherent social pathology among ‘non-europeans’. While Willemse died in 1945, in later years the school of criminology that he helped to found came to play a vital role in the intellectual justification of apartheid, and in increasingly linking ‘race’ to criminality in official discourse.⁴⁷⁴

Behaviour Deviates and Industrial Schools

Noting that a large proportion of the pupils in Industrial Schools were behaviour deviates or maladjusted children, the *Annual Report of the Union Education Department* asserted in 1949 that:

This behaviour aberration arose from unfavourable domestic circumstances resulting in their directive sentiments being poorly developed, and thus the child was unable to satisfy his strong primary urges viz. self-assertion and security. The non-gratification of these urges then caused a state of tension for which the individual child tried to find relief by means of substitute gratifications, which were mostly of a undesirable nature.⁴⁷⁵

By situating the problem of maladjustment firmly within the personality of each individual child, the task of professionals was therefore to show how maladjustment manifested itself in different forms in each individual. This removed substantially the reference to the societal environmental issues and led to the increased phenomenon of ‘blame the victim’ (and his/her family).

While the aberrant behaviour of the ‘poor white’ industrial school pupil was explained in terms of feelings of inferiority that were deemed to be due to undesirable surroundings and poverty,⁴⁷⁶ the ‘maladjustment’ of the ‘non-white’

⁴⁷⁴ Dubow, S (1995), pp.154-160

⁴⁷⁵ Union of South Africa (1952), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1949-UG 18/1952*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.14)

⁴⁷⁶ Union of South Africa (1938), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1937-UG 51/1938*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.27)

industrial school pupils was attributed to their “organic cultural or biological inferiority”, and to their “biological proneness to commit wrong.”⁴⁷⁷

Furthermore, given this directive to focus on making each child personally responsible for his own salvation, the industrial school system was subsequently challenged to provide programmes that would assist the individual child to realise his own personality by developing his ‘potentialities’ to the full. The industrial school system thus started to put into place mechanisms that would in future not only differentiate between institutions for the different ‘races’, but also allow for programme-differentiation based on levels of intelligence.⁴⁷⁸ Psychologists would henceforth determine the special needs of the individual child based on ‘race’, IQ levels, levels of impoverishment, job suitability in a differentiated job market, and the nature of the individual personality.

Thus, the growth in the number of government industrial schools from 7 in 1937 to 15 by 1951⁴⁷⁹ served to indicate not only a pre-occupation with social re-organisation and order, but also the intrinsic role played by the discipline of psychology (using as its basis individual instruction) in the re-organisation of the government industrial school system.

Conclusion

Linda Chisholm has argued that, in the three decades after the First World War, a important shift in penology took place which increasingly emphasised the control of delinquency and crime through ideological means. She notes that this movement effectively harnessed the expert knowledge of a new class of professional social

⁴⁷⁷ Union of South Africa (1938), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1937-UG 51/1938*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.27)

⁴⁷⁸ In the Union Education Department Report of 1948, Industrial Schools were separated (for the first time) into those for children of (a) normal intelligence, (b) subnormal intelligence, and (c) behaviour deviates. This system of differentiation was only ever used in relation to ‘white’ industrial school pupils. With ‘coloured’ and ‘indian’ pupils a ‘simple’ split between those of urban or rural origin was instead employed. See Union of South Africa (1948), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for Calendar Years 1946-7- UG 41/1948*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.17).

⁴⁷⁹ Union of South Africa (1951), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1950- UG 64/1951*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.17)

workers, psychiatrists and educationalists (schooled in modern techniques of managing deviancy) to a developing state system of ‘surveillance’ and ‘control’, which ultimately “enabled the symbolic identification, isolation and neutralisation of social threat”.⁴⁸⁰

It has been argued in this chapter that developments in psychology (replicating similar movements overseas) ultimately served to not only identify those who threatened the social order, but to offer principles of classification and differentiation that significantly impacted on the subsequent ‘racial’ agenda of the Nationalist Party after 1948. It was no accident that the mental testing movement in South Africa gathered momentum at just the moment that debates of segregation and the ‘poor white’ question became pressing political priorities. Mental testing was subsequently used to ‘confirm’ popular racist notions that ‘non-whites’ were inherently intellectually inferior to ‘whites’, and that inferiority amongst whites was generally caused by environmental factors.

Saul Dubow has asserted that “one might plausibly speak of a discourse of psychological domination (in this period) in which power was conferred upon those specialists who claimed to possess singular knowledge of the ‘native mind’, the ‘feeble-minded’, and the ‘criminally-tainted and insane’.”⁴⁸¹

Furthermore, from the 1940s within the industrial school movement, the development of a new brand of professional psychologists, located in state institutions and bodies as well as in the universities, allowed for far greater ‘scientific’ intervention than was the norm previously. These teacher-psychologists, via individual and group tests, thence determined not just the intelligence levels of children, but also what *trades* the children were best suited for, their ‘*academic*’ capacities, and their envisaged *behavioural* patterns.

⁴⁸⁰ Chisholm (1989), p.363; also pp.153, 163, 159, and 354

⁴⁸¹ Dubow (1995), p.245



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***Chapter 4:
Technical and
Vocational Educational
In South Africa;
Education and Training
in the context of the
social-democratic
ideals of the 1940s***

Introduction

It was asserted in Section A that the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in 1948 was clearly informed by the trade training needs of ‘coloured’ boys at that time. This training was linked to social debates about the ‘useful citizen’ and social order in urban areas. The debates about what was deemed to be ‘generally unstable’ social conditions among the coloured working class in the Western Cape from the 1930s had highlighted the need to provide ‘coloured’ boys with particular kinds of skills. These skills were primarily associated with work discipline and work preparedness. The focus on providing increased employment opportunities for the ‘coloured’ population meant that greater attention had to be paid to the early age that ‘coloured’ children were leaving school, the lack of opportunities for learning a trade and thereby securing ‘gainful’ employment, and the general lack of social welfare, educational and recreational facilities that provided for a ‘stable’ working environment.

With regard to the ‘coloured’ population in the period after the Second World War, it was recognised (by the United Party government) that work ‘had to be created’ for the ‘non-white’ urban unskilled and unemployed, as well as for ‘coloured’ soldiers returning to their mostly urban environments after the Second World War, to “enable them to enter the ranks of the workers and be self-supporting.”⁴⁸² However, the provision of skilled manual labour opportunities in the late 1940s was determined by the prevailing system of apprenticeship in South Africa at that time. Any reform of the technical education system after 1945 had to therefore not only be mindful of the role of apprenticeship in a racially constituted labour market, but also had to frame changes in the system within the logic and previous development of these services (industrial and technical education) in South Africa.

⁴⁸² Union of South Africa (1948), *The Report of the Commission on Technical and Vocational Education of 1948- hereafter the De Villiers Commission*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.253) Also see Section A, pp.42-48

This chapter will examine the development of the systems of industrial and technical education provision in South Africa and locate the nature of the trade training that was provided for ‘coloured’ boys at the Ottery School of Industries after 1948 in the context of the history of this provision.

The key assertion of the chapter is that the Union Government resolved to address the trade training and employment needs of ‘coloured’ children after the Second World War in the context of the indigency and high rate of delinquency that was deemed to be prevalent among the ‘coloured’ population, especially in the urban areas. In this period trade training for employment in the emerging industries, as well as ‘teaching people the habits of work’, were key aspects of the social policies of the Union Government. These social policies were not only focused on the reconstruction of the South African economy at that time, but also on how trade and employment training could be utilised in relation to the ‘regulation’ of the ‘coloured’ working class in South Africa.

a) Notions of educational ‘change’ in the post-World War II period

The De Villiers Commission of 1948 had sought to devise a broad framework for a reconstructed system of education and indicated the general principles that it believed ought to govern future growth in South Africa. Specifically, it sought to focus on the education and training of the adolescent and how this arena might be shaped in order to have a positive influence on “the real demands of the ‘nation’”. Vocational education was defined as “instruction and training in commerce, agriculture, housecraft or any trade or industry.”⁴⁸³

The De Villiers Commission conceived of its task as covering the *whole field of education*, as provided for by both the Central Government and the Provinces. This

⁴⁸³ The De Villiers Commission noted that although the origin of technical education was quite different from that of ‘industrial education’, its study of vocational education referred to the education provided at industrial schools, technical and agricultural colleges and technical, commercial, housecraft and agricultural high schools. De Villiers Commission (1948), p.2, 7

included the provision of “instruction of a vocational character in the curriculum of the primary and secondary schools (that provided educational facilities of a general character)”. The Commission asserted that technical and vocational training couldn’t be efficient, and thereby “meet the modern-day demands of industry, commerce and agriculture, without the sound foundation of primary and general secondary education”.⁴⁸⁴

With regard to the ‘coloured’ population, the Commission asserted in 1948 that education policy makers needed to concede the limits of providing technical education for ‘coloured’ youth. In this period, education was not compulsory for ‘coloured’ children. Many ‘coloured’ boys therefore had not reached the requisite scholastic level to qualify for entry to the trade training examinations. Also, other than the trade training facilities at Ottery School of Industries, Porter Reformatory and the COTT Centre No.14, no other state institutions provided technical education training for ‘coloured’ youths at that time.⁴⁸⁵ The Commission argued that, considering the many “physical limitations”, the provision of technical training for the ‘coloured’ population needed to focus rather “simply on teaching Coloured boys how to work”. “Such a focus would also address the issues of poverty and aimlessness of the children of the submerged coloured groups”.⁴⁸⁶ At that time, the ‘coloured’ ‘submerged class’ was deemed to constitute the bulk of the ‘coloured’ population.

1. The early social democratic tradition

Prominent educationalists like Fred Clarke⁴⁸⁷ had emphasised in the 1920s that vocational education “needed to be understood as including all its far-reaching relationships, economic, social and political”, and that each man had to be treated

⁴⁸⁴ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.2

⁴⁸⁵ The Cape Technical College provided training for a limited number of ‘non-whites’. The College catered for those with the appropriate grades and who could financially afford to enrol there.

⁴⁸⁶ De Villiers Commission (1948), pp.256-7

⁴⁸⁷ F.Clarke was the first holder of the Chair of Education at the University of Cape Town between 1911-1929, Professor of Education at McGill University in Montreal from 1929-1934, and Professor of Education and Director of the Institute of Education at London University between 1936-1945. See Peter Kallaway (1996), “Fred Clarke and the Politics of Vocational Education in South Africa:

“not merely as a worker, but as a working citizen, with all a citizen’s responsibilities.”⁴⁸⁸ In Clarke’s view the distinction between the vocational and the ‘cultural’ (referring to academic education) could not be translated simply as a distinction “between quite different groups of subjects and activities, nor as a distinction between separate classes or different social groups within a community.”⁴⁸⁹ Like respected educationalist John Dewey, Fred Clarke was particularly concerned to refute the charge that vocational education was ‘uncultured’. Instead, he asserted that the relationship between the ‘cultural’ and the ‘vocational’ needed to be modified to ensure that “the correct balance was arrived at that would enhance the rights of the individual and ensure that the individual was adequately prepared for the world of work”.⁴⁹⁰

While Clarke’s critical perspective of this ‘crisis of values’ indicated a particular desire to come to terms with the complexities of class and race that was emerging in South Africa in the 1920s, it also reflected much of ‘liberal’ thinking in South Africa at the time.⁴⁹¹ Clarke’s writings represented an attempt to grapple with that salient feature of early twentieth century international educational discourse regarding the relationship between education, human rights, work and democracy, namely the ‘social democratic tradition’ (highlighted by the work of John Dewey). Peter Kallaway has noted that these ideas “became the basis of much policy development in the social democracies from the 1930s to the 1970’s. A key aspect of that philosophy was the assumption that governments, especially democratic governments, had duties to all citizens”, and that it was:

The state’s business to not only ensure that there were adequate educational facilities for all children, but that the necessary conditions for the exercise of those individual rights to equality of opportunity in education be enshrined in social policy and social services.⁴⁹²

1911-1929”, *History of Education*, 25(4), 1996, p.354

⁴⁸⁸ Clarke, F (1928), ‘Vocational Teaching and the Primary School’, *The Social and Industrial Review*, 1928, pp.823-4. Cited in Kallaway, P (1996), p.17

⁴⁸⁹ Mitchell, FW (1967), *Sir Fred Clarke: Master Teacher 1880-1952*, (London, Longmans, pp.47-48). Cited in Kallaway (1996), p.17

⁴⁹⁰ Kallaway (1996), p.6

⁴⁹¹ Kallaway (1996), p.2

⁴⁹² Kallaway, P (1994), “Policy Challenges for Education in the ‘New’ South Africa: The Case for School Feeding in the context of Social and Economic Reconstruction”, *Transformation*, 31, 1996,

Significantly, Clarke wrote in a period in which “education was on the march in South Africa”.⁴⁹³ Fundamental questions were being asked at that point about the most potent means for equipping youth for a full and active life. The Secretary of Education in 1928 noted that:

Modern tendencies in education accentuate the necessity of regarding it as being closely bound up with economic, industrial and social questions. The Union may be said to be passing through its Industrial Revolution, and it is particularly a function of this (Education) Department to furnish the educational facilities that our rapidly changing industrial conditions require.⁴⁹⁴

Linda Chisholm has observed that the ‘prescribed’ task of ‘liberal’ education in this period was to act as an integrative force.⁴⁹⁵ With the gradual shift in educational focus from cultural ‘adaptation’ to social and economic ‘adaptation’ from the 1920s, the educational system for ‘white’ children was increasingly being challenged to meet:

- a) The diversified educational needs of pupils due to bigger numbers, longer school life and a wider range of abilities being drawn into the school net; and
b) The economic and social needs of the country due to increased industrialisation.⁴⁹⁶

Nonetheless, the inability of South African policy-makers and politicians to subsequently develop a policy that sought to ‘unite’ vocational and academic education, and that did not *simply* associate vocational education with ‘training for the activities of manual labourers’, says much about the development and nature of vocational and technical training in the South African context in the inter-war period, as well as its relation to social and political policy.

p.4

⁴⁹³ Union of South Africa (1928), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1928 (UG 51-1929)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.5)

⁴⁹⁴ UG 51-1929, p.5

⁴⁹⁵ Chisholm, L (1989), *Reformatories and Industrial Schools in South Africa: A Study in Class, Colour and Gender, 1882-1939*, (Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, unpublished doctoral dissertation, p.314)

⁴⁹⁶ Malherbe, EG (1977), *Education in South Africa, Volume II: 1923-1975*, (Cape Town, Juta and Co.Ltd, p.155)

2. The construction of Union Education Policy: Education and 'white' children in the 1920s

Notwithstanding the desire to use the educational system to bring about effective social and economic change, educational policy-makers in this period were increasingly faced with the need to firstly get 'white' children into school, then to keep them there, and finally to provide facilities to enable them to profit by being there. These 'requirements' were informed at that time by the need for a stable white working class in urban areas.

Malherbe notes that by 1930 "most of the 'white' children of school-going age had been drawn into the school net by gradually extending the limits of free and compulsory education".⁴⁹⁷ This was the result of unprecedented state funding in education provided for 'white' children. Increased state funding was also a direct response to address the social problems associated with increased 'white' urbanisation in that period. The 'white' population of urban areas increased from about 50% to roughly 66% in that period. State expenditure in education for 'white' children grew from about R3,5 million in 1910 to R18 million by 1930. This represented 20% of the national expenditure on all state services (excluding railways) at the time.

However, having brought these ('white') children into the school arena, the education authorities were increasingly faced with the problem of the suitability of the education provided at the different levels: "People began to ask why so many of the adolescents who left school were unemployed, and why so many of those who got work did not seem to give satisfaction".⁴⁹⁸

3. The 'white nation' and rural strife

It was also at this time that the 'poor white' question loomed very large in the 'white' public mind in the context of the Depression and its aftermath.⁴⁹⁹ The

⁴⁹⁷ Malherbe (1977), p.156

⁴⁹⁸ Malherbe (1977), p.156

⁴⁹⁹ Morrell, R (ed) (1991), *White but Poor: Essays on the History of Poor Whites in Southern Africa*

‘white nation’ was seen to be in trouble economically, and it was believed that ‘remedies’ were needed to address social and economic needs. In 1932 it was estimated that there were as many as 300 000 ‘poor whites’ out of a total ‘white’ population of 1,8 million (16,6%) in South Africa, a large proportion of whom were the benefactors of charity and relief.

In a period of rapid economic transition in rural areas, that involved a move to modern forms of industrialised and commercialised agriculture, farmers and their families were faced with increased competition that involved a closer association with markets in urban and industrial centres. Many failed to make the transition and chose instead to move to the cities in search of employment.⁵⁰⁰ Urbanisation of this nature brought with it new social problems. With the very limited employment opportunities for rural emigrants in the cities, ‘poor whites’ found themselves in open competition with ‘non-whites’ for unskilled jobs. This had particular political ramifications, especially since rural ‘white’ emigrants believed that doing unskilled work would seemingly reduce them to the level of ‘non-whites’. This dilemma was addressed in the context of the rise in support for Afrikaner Nationalism in that period. Malherbe has noted that even though rural ‘whites’ came to the cities unskilled,⁵⁰¹ they quickly found very useful allies in the cities in the form of Afrikaner nationalist politicians who were keen to ‘save’ them from their ‘plight’.⁵⁰²

The Carnegie Commission of 1932⁵⁰³ had found that on leaving school nearly 47,1% of all ‘white’ rural boys went in for farming, and that up to 58,3% of them had not even completed standard VI at that stage. The Commission observed that if

1880-1940, (Pretoria, University of South Africa Press). In the introduction, Bill Freund discusses the elusiveness of the term ‘poor whites’ and its social and ideological construction.

⁵⁰⁰ Chisholm notes that not only were rural ‘whites’ ‘pushed’ into the cities as a “consequence of the growing commercialisation of agriculture, stimulated by the proclamation of the goldfields”, but their number also grew as a result of many “rural disasters of rinderpest, drought and locusts”. See Chisholm (1989), p.65.

⁵⁰¹ Malherbe (1977), p.157

⁵⁰² Bill Freund refers to the “plight” of ‘poor whites’ as both their lack of skills and their having to compete with ‘non-whites’ for unskilled work. See Freund, W, “Introduction: The Poor Whites: a social force and a social problem in South African History”, in Morrell (1991), pp.xiii-xiv.

⁵⁰³ See Malherbe, EG (1932), *Education and the Poor White*, (Carnegie Commission Report Volume III, p111). Also cited in Malherbe (1977), p.157

the parents of boys with low levels of schooling were themselves poor, these boys would probably become 'poor whites' at times of economic strife.⁵⁰⁴

To remedy the situation in the rural areas, the Union Government stepped in from the 1920s and provided State agricultural schools⁵⁰⁵ under the Union Education Department. Having initially attempted to introduce agriculture as a subject in some high schools, Central Government very quickly realised that the Provinces could simply not afford the costs of providing practical training facilities and therefore set aside large amounts of funds for the establishment of state agricultural schools (for 'white' rural children) under national control. Despite all these efforts to intervene in favour of 'rural white' children in an attempt to keep them in rural areas, these institutions were very poorly supported. This was linked to the great expense of providing proper agricultural vocational education, by the lack of skilled teachers for such an enterprise and the associated residential requirements that this entailed. By 1937 state agricultural schools had a total of less than 200 pupils. The reason for this was two-fold. Malherbe notes that as farming became more and more mechanised from the 1920s on, the percentage of economically-active 'whites' engaged in farming actually decreased, from 30% in 1926, to 15% in 1950, to 10% in 1960, to 7% in 1970. Secondly, because of the general association of Union Education Department institutions with destitution and deficiency (this is explored later), many of those 'white' children seeking access to vocational education were 'discouraged' from attending the agricultural schools.

4. The 'poor white' in the cities

Until the 1930s, with the rapid expansion of secondary industries and the growth of urbanisation, there were hardly any industries in South Africa (except the railways and the mines) that could absorb these unskilled 'previously-rural populations'. In

⁵⁰⁴ Malherbe (1977), p.157

⁵⁰⁵ Rickett (1971), pp.259-296

many European countries during the nineteenth century countries large industries, the army or the navy were used quite effectively to absorb those ‘alienated’ from the land during the transition to industrialisation. In South Africa, state intervention that sought to address this lack of industries developed in the context of providing the ‘white’ population with access to skills and employment that would serve the developing industries at many levels.⁵⁰⁶ In this regard, in the context of the need for greater social planning, the Union Government was particularly concerned about the slow development of vocational and technical education.

Malherbe has also argued that although unskilled or manual labour and certain semi-skilled trades in South Africa at the turn of the century was generally regarded as “kaffir work”⁵⁰⁷ and looked upon by ‘white’ workers as ‘degrading’ and unacceptable, the resistance of ‘poor whites’ to learning the trades was also an economically rational one.

The ‘reluctance’ to do manual labour was linked to earlier ‘native education’ policies which asserted that manual labour was the domain of ‘native’ workers. It was argued that “the spheres of work of the two races had to be widely different” and that “any system of instruction that failed to take into account that patent fact, and that gave the ‘natives’ a literary and bookish education, when the work that the ‘natives’ will be required to do will be, for the most part, industrial and agricultural, would be doing the ‘native’ more harm than good”.⁵⁰⁸ Malherbe asserts that it was in this context that the ‘poor white’, “after losing nearly everything, clung to his only remaining symbol of superiority over the ‘black’ (‘non-white’) man”:

He had a ‘white skin and would not, however poor he might be, drop to the level of the ‘black’ man by doing that type of work in the employ of another person.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁶ Chisholm (1989), p.251

⁵⁰⁷ Malherbe (1977), p.161

⁵⁰⁸ Loram, C (1921), “The claims of the Native question upon scientists”, *South African Review of Science*, 18, p.99. Cited in Mahlangu, PM (1991), *A Comparative Study: Differences and Similarities between Native Education and Bantu Education with regard to Schooling for Africans in South Africa* (unpublished doctoral mini-thesis, New Mexico State University, p.52). See also Dodd, AD (1936), *Native Vocational Training: A Study of Conditions in South Africa 1652-1936*, (Pretoria, Lovedale Press, pp.33-40)

⁵⁰⁹ Malherbe (1977), p.162

The Annual Report of the Union Education Department in 1938 observed however that “with the large percentage of the (‘white’) children in schools endowed with intelligence so limited that they cannot be expected to achieve a high standard of scholastic attainment”,⁵¹⁰ ‘poor whites’ as a group presented particular social and educational problems. Furthermore, the Report claimed that the “presence of a large ‘coloured’ and ‘native’ population in South Africa enormously complicated the difficulty of finding the most suitable education for ‘European’ children of less than average ability.”⁵¹¹ With the development of industries and the increasing reservation of semi-skilled jobs and trades for ‘whites’ from the 1930s, the previous trend to reserve unskilled work for ‘non-whites’ was slowly reversed.

In this regard, it is necessary to examine the origins of the provision of technical and industrial education in South Africa to understand the various ways in which these provisions were provided for the ‘white’ population.

b) Origins of industrial and technical education

i) Industrial Education

While the history of vocational or industrial education in South Africa is intimately linked to the history of technical education and cannot be understood separately, it is important to recognise the rather different origins of the two aspects of policy.

Malherbe has noted that:

The genesis of industrial education is not identical with that of technical education. Technical education arose out of the needs of the growing industries, while industrial education developed out of the desire to help the poor whites.⁵¹²

Malherbe contends that industrial education came to be proposed as a specific measure to combat ‘poor whiteism’ in the 1890’s; as the means to train potential poor ‘white’ boys from the rural areas in industrial occupations such as shoemaking,

⁵¹⁰ Union of South Africa (1939), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1938* (hereafter *UG 59/1939*), (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.11)

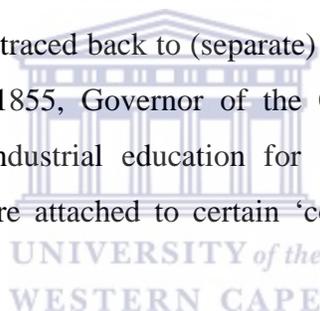
⁵¹¹ *UG 59/1939*, p.11

⁵¹² Malherbe (1932), “*Education of the Poor White*”: *Report of the Carnegie Commission*, (Stellenbosch, Pro Ecelesia Drukkery, p.55)

carpentry, smithy work etc, and to train poor ‘white’ girls for domestically-related occupations. In this period the Dutch Reformed Church in particular was instrumental in the establishment of industrial schools in an attempt to alleviate the destitution and poverty of poor ‘white’ children (that accompanied war, epidemic and economic depression).⁵¹³

Yet, interestingly, Malherbe also stresses that when vocational and industrial training was first introduced at the Cape Colony it was provided not for ‘whites’, but for ‘non-whites’. For example, “for almost 50 years before 1900, bricklaying, plastering, painting, decorating, engine cleaning, shoemaking, tailoring, carpentry and masonry were in fact widely considered only fit for ‘coloured’ men and overseas workers.”⁵¹⁴

Thus, the earliest traces of vocational education were ironically not associated with poverty. Rather, it can be traced back to (separate) mission schools for ‘native’ and ‘coloured’ children. In 1855, Governor of the Cape Colony Sir George Grey instituted a scheme of industrial education for ‘native’ children, and in 1861 industrial departments were attached to certain ‘coloured’ mission schools at the Cape.



Vocational education and the colonial project

Industrial or vocational education occupied a very “special place in colonial ideology, that was directly related to efforts aimed at ‘civilising’ African peoples in the latter half of the nineteenth century.”⁵¹⁵ For a long time before the turn of this century, the industrial education movement (expressed loosely in ways that drew upon experiences of experimental projects elsewhere)⁵¹⁶ was firmly focused on

⁵¹³ Malherbe (1977), *Education in South Africa Volume II: 1923-1975*, (Cape Town, Juta and Co. Ltd, p.164)

⁵¹⁴ Malherbe (1977), p.163

⁵¹⁵ Kallaway, P (1989), “Colonial Education in Natal: The Zwaartkop Government Native School, 1888-1892”, *Perspectives in Education, Volume 10, no.2, 1992, p.17* . Also see King, K (1971), *Pan Africanism and Education* (Oxford, Clarendon Press)

⁵¹⁶ For examples, see Bennett, CA (1937), *History of Manual and Industrial Education, 1870-1917* (Peoria, Illinois: Manual Arts Press, pp.53-106) on the Slojd educational experiment in Scandinavia. On the development of the ‘special’ or ‘adapted’ education for Southern ‘Freedmen’ associated with Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee Institute, see Bullock, HA (1967), *A History of Negro*

providing ‘different’ or ‘adapted special education’ for ‘primitive peoples’ in a rural context.⁵¹⁷

However, in the 1890’s, at a time when large numbers of people were being propelled off the land by changes in agrarian relations, the provision of industrial education became more intimately linked to an argument in favour of a schooling that was directly relevant to the environment and life chances of ‘white’, especially rural, children.⁵¹⁸ An article in the *Cape Argus* in 1892 noted that:

What to do with our (‘white’) boys promises to be as troublesome a question in this new country...as in the outworn communities of the old world. It is not that the commercial and professional classes in towns find it difficult to place their sons satisfactorily in the way of attaining a position equal to that of their fathers. The difficulty extends to the sons of working men, and what is more serious for the future of the country, to the sons of the farming community.⁵¹⁹

Furthermore, the *Cape Argus* observed that:

Some Parliamentary action will doubtless be taken. Of course there have always been poor ‘whites’ in the colony: but...it would appear that the class is growing in numbers and sinking in condition every year. There are poor ‘white’ children in both town and country whom it is most desirable to bring under the schoolmaster without further delay.⁵²⁰

It was at this point that industrial education came to be simultaneously associated with the social salvation of ‘white’ children⁵²¹ as well as an aspect of calls for greater differentiation within the emerging education system for ‘white’ children. An Education Commission appointed by the Cape Government in 1891 had noted that:

Education in the South: From 1619 to the Present, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press) and Dabney, CW (1936), *Universal education in the South*, (Chapel Hill)

⁵¹⁷ Kallaway (1992), p.18

⁵¹⁸ See Kallaway (1992), p.28

⁵¹⁹ *The Cape Argus*, 25th October 1892. Cited in Rickett (1971), *The Evolution of Full-Time Vocational Education in the Cape Province*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished doctoral dissertation, p.48)

⁵²⁰ *The Cape Argus*, 14th December 1892, as cited in Rickett (1971), p.48

⁵²¹ Industrial education at that point became largely linked to the depressed economic conditions and poverty of a large section of the ‘white’ population. Its object was the general social rehabilitation of the poor ‘white’ youth of the country, the majority of whom left school at the end of primary school, ill-equipped for life.

The school-work must be made more variously fitted for the scholar. There must be thousands of 'white' children even in the towns for whom booklore has not a complete charm. Yet these children need the discipline and training to be had only in a school. In many of these cases, blackboard drawing, woodcarving, cardboard modelling and some other handicrafts and modes... are particularly applicable.⁵²²

It is argued that this 'shift' in focus in industrial education policy (as noted by Malherbe) from 'non-whites' to 'poor whites' needs to be understood as an intrinsic aspect of colonial state strategy at the turn of the century that increasingly sought to respond to the social and political context of the emerging 'white' education system.⁵²³

Furthermore, it is argued that, against the background of this emerging edifice of 'white education' in the early part of the century, and given the specific location of the experiences of the 'poor whites' within that picture, this system of industrial education developed in direct relation to (and impacted upon):-

1. The construction of 'native education' policy from the 1920s; and
2. The ongoing conflict between the Provinces and the Central Government vis-a-vis the nature and control of vocational and technical education in the Union.⁵²⁴

Noting that industrial education policy was framed in this period in ambiguous ways that were informed by the economic, social and political context, it is then significant that up until 1925 industrial education had been manifested rather differently at the 'private', provincial and central levels.

Industrial/ technical education: the struggle between the Provinces and Central Government

Rickett(1971)⁵²⁵ and Malherbe (1977)⁵²⁶ have both emphasised the pioneering role of the Churches and the Provinces with regard to industrial education at the turn of

⁵²² *Report of the Cape Colony Education Commission, 1891-2*, p.11. Cited in Rickett (1971), p.51

⁵²³ Kallaway (1992), p.18, 30

⁵²⁴ Colonial strategy with regard to industrial training for 'natives' was rather different to that envisaged for 'poor whites'. It is not within the scope of this chapter to interrogate these differences, nor to provide a history of the former. See De Villiers Commission (1948), pp.232-251. For a historical survey of 'native' education, see Union of South Africa (1936), *Inter-Departmental Committee Report on Native Education (U.G. 29-1936)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, chapter 1+2)

⁵²⁵ Rickett (1971), pp.9-11, 46-52

the century. Rickett, in particular, provides a rich account of the diverse types of industrial schools that evolved at the ‘private’, provincial and rural levels in the Cape Colony at the turn of the century. He observes that industrial schools (in the Cape Colony) in the early part of the century were *essentially* schools for teaching trades to the children of ‘white’ parents in poor circumstances.

Early history of industrial schools and differentiation

Rickett notes however that these industrial schools were of varying types and that:

It is necessary to point this out as terms were used somewhat indiscriminately about this time and cause confusion to this day.⁵²⁷

There existed industrial schools (referred to ‘loosely’ as trade schools) started by the Dutch Reformed Church that sought to indenture ‘white’ indigent boys between the ages of 11 to 20 years as apprentices in one of the trades of bookbinding, cabinet-making, carpentry, plumbing, shoemaking, or upholstery in factories and workshops in the towns.⁵²⁸ These institutions focused more however on the indigent conditions of the children than on their trade training needs.

Then there existed a type of industrial school that was privately-owned and ‘paid its own way’ by selling the work produced at the institution. An example of such an institution would be the Salesian Institute in Cape Town.⁵²⁹

There were the farm industrial schools like the Stellenbosch Boys’ Industrial Home, that focused on agricultural trades such as saddlery, shoemaking, blacksmithing etc.⁵³⁰ There were also many single-teacher industrial departments attached to indigent boarding houses.

⁵²⁶ Malherbe (1977), pp.164-5; Also see De Villiers Commission (1948), pp.5-7

⁵²⁷ Rickett (1971), p.52

⁵²⁸ For an account of the Cape Town Industrial Home (1892-1902) and the Uitenhage Industrial School (1895-), noting also the essential differences between the two institutions, see Rickett (1971), pp. 56-63.

⁵²⁹ This institution was “renowned for its work in the rehabilitation of wayward boys not committed to government industrial schools, and for the care it provided for boys from broken homes, especially in the 1970’s”. See Rickett (1971), pp.63-5

⁵³⁰ Rickett notes that these agricultural industrial schools did not later lead to the establishment of agricultural high schools. Rather, farm industrial schools concentrated on teaching trades more relevant to the needs of the farm. The Stellenbosch Boys Industrial School was closed in 1914. See Rickett (1971), pp.63-5.

Lastly, there were industrial schools that were established by the Churches but that were given grants-in-aid by Provincial administrations, namely provincial industrial schools that provided trade training at the post-primary school level.⁵³¹ Rickett notes that the function of the bulk of these trade or industrial schools in the period 1895-1925 was to give pre-apprenticeship training in skilled trades for those who wanted to become artisans. While this was certainly the rhetoric, this provision was significantly informed by the need to socialise the indigent ‘white’ class in urban environments.

From 1917, by the authority of the Children’s Protection Act of 1913, the term ‘industrial schools’ came to refer specifically to those institutions under the Union Education Department that provided for ‘white’ children ‘in need of care’. Whereas the term industrial education had been commonly used in the Provinces at the turn of the century to refer to the “special provision for the education of all poor, indigent (‘white’) children”, soon after the passing of Union it became solely associated with the Union Education Department, and with significant links to the penal system.

It is noteworthy however that many of the industrial (trade) schools under the provincial education departments after 1917 continued to be referred to as industrial schools.⁵³² This anomaly was explained in terms of the industrial ‘training’ provided at these quite ‘separate’ institutions. Up until the 1940s the only discernible distinction between the Union Government industrial school and the provincial industrial school was that in the former, children were committed to the institution via the legal/penal system.

⁵³¹ The two most prominent of these ‘industrial schools’ in the Cape Province were the Paarl Boys’ Industrial School and the Worcester Industrial School (later renamed the Drostdy Technical High School). See Rickett (1971), pp.63-7.

⁵³² This ‘problem’ was initially resolved by referring to industrial schools for children ‘in need of care’ as government industrial schools. In 1944 when most trade schools and provincial industrial schools were given permission to offer courses to the standard-ten level, these institutions came to be referred to as technical high schools. Similarly, after 1944, Union Education Department industrial schools were referred to as ‘schools of industries’.

In fact, in his *Annual Report for 1925*, Secretary for the Union Education Department, George Hofmeyr, pointedly reflected that:

The terms ‘trades’ and ‘industrial’ as applied to schools have been applied somewhat indiscriminately. In the past the industrial school has been taken to imply an institution for juvenile(-type) offenders. (However) the industrial school is neither more or less than a trade school for boys/girls who have been committed under the Children’s Protection Act. From the educational standpoint the trades and industrial schools must be regarded as a single group.⁵³³

Also, the ‘trade’ or provincial industrial schools were themselves not a homogenous group of institutions. From the early 1900’s industrial education, in the form of trade training and apprenticeships, had been actively advocated as the recipe to address ‘white’ unemployment. The *Report of the Transvaal Indigency Commission of 1906-8* (and later also the *Report of Industrial Education Committee of 1916* and the *Report of the Relief and Grants-in-Aid Commission of 1917*) had stressed the necessity to provide various forms of vocational education alongside the institution of a Juvenile Labour Exchange and provision of apprenticeships for boys to the ‘skilled trades’.⁵³⁴

The provision of vocational education sought therefore to serve both the needs of the indigent as well as those seeking trade training. In fact, the *National Advisory Board for Technical Education* had observed in 1913 that there were many ‘trade’ industrial schools that provided a rather different service to that of ‘indigent’ industrial schools. The Board believed however that due to the state of primary education for ‘white’ children at the time, and bearing in mind the “indigent condition of a considerable section of the ‘European’ population”, it was necessary that a high standard of technical instruction not be sought at all industrial schools. It nevertheless conceded that ‘indigent’ industrial schools would in time need to be replaced by ‘trade’ industrial schools.⁵³⁵ It was envisaged that with greater control

⁵³³ Union Education Department (1926), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1925*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.78)

⁵³⁴ Chisholm (1989), p.253

⁵³⁵ Union of South Africa (1913), “Appendix: National Advisory Board for Technical Education”, *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1912 (U.G. 21-1913)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer). For details on the history of the Board, see Rickett (1971), pp.11-13 and pp.80-84. The

and co-ordination all industrial ('trade' and 'indigent') schools would come to serve those students who had completed their primary school course and who were seeking apprenticeship in trade theory and training.⁵³⁶

The transfer of all Industrial Schools to the Union Education Department in 1925

By 1925 a considerable degree of experimentation⁵³⁷ had therefore already taken place in the different provinces with regard to the development of industrial education. In this year the administration and provision of *all* industrial and technical education became the sole responsibility of the Union Education Department⁵³⁸.

Notwithstanding the rather significant contributions by the Churches and the various Provinces to the development of industrial schools in the Union, this transfer of power from the Provinces to the Central Government in 1925 represented the single most significant benchmark in the history of industrial and technical education in South Africa.

In 1922 the Superintendent-General of Education had noted that:

From the point of view of the state, no less than that of the educationist, it is imperative that all industrial schoolwork should be on the best organised lines, especially as industrial training is one of the most costly branches of education. Further, it is essential that the training given should be definitely related to the life of the community, if there is to be justification for the expenditure involved.⁵³⁹

From 1925 onwards, with increasing differentiation in the education system for 'white' children, most of the 'dangerous' 'poor white' youth were diverted to government industrial schools under the Children's Protection Act of 1913. And

Board was chaired by Fred Clarke and served in a vital advisory capacity from 1912 to 1918.

⁵³⁶ Rickett (1971), p.82

⁵³⁷ While many of the industrial schools described above were closed before 1925, many continued to exist, albeit in rather different capacities and roles. See De Villiers Commission of 1948, pp.5-9. Also see Rickett (1971), pp.45-157

⁵³⁸ They remained under the control of the Union Government until 1967. In that year control of industrial education was again handed over to provincial administrations.

⁵³⁹ Cape Provincial Administration (1922), *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education*, (Cape Town, p.27)

those that were not regarded as a threat to social order were increasingly accommodated in a developing system of commercial, agricultural, housecraft, technical and provincial and state-aided industrial (trade) schools administered by the Union Education Department.

However, the nature and degree of subsequent reform in the industrial education system was thenceforth largely informed by:-

1. The way in that industrial schools had developed under the different Churches, provincial departments and charity societies (with rather different laws, administrations and goals) and how the individual institutions resolved the dilemmas presented by social and economic conditions; and by
2. The specific ideological and political perspectives that initially gave impetus to the establishment of 'white' industrial schools.⁵⁴⁰

Industrial education post-1925

A number of writers have asserted that industrial schools were an intrinsic aspect of the Union Government's industrial and 'white labour' policy in the 1920s. Both J. Lewis and Rob Davies have shown how the state intervened after 1922 to re-allocate 'poor whites' to (non-skilled) manual and semi-skilled positions.⁵⁴¹ Because training was essential to this project, various forms of vocational, technical and industrial education had been provided for 'white' children.

However, up until 1925 each Province in South Africa had been free to develop its own systems of industrial education. And within the Provinces the systems of education were itself largely unco-ordinated.⁵⁴² In this respect, the transfer of control of industrial education for 'white' children from the Provinces to the Union Education Department in 1925 provided (for the first time) the opportunity for the

⁵⁴⁰ Cape Province (1923), *The Special Report on Industrial Schools and Industrial Departments in the Cape Province (CP2 of 1923)*, is of great historical value in this regard. It provides a vivid picture of the state of affairs that existed in relation to industrial schools at that time.

⁵⁴¹ Davies, R (1979), *Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa 1900-1960: An Historical Materialist Analysis of Class Formation and Class Relations*, (Brighton, 1979). Also see Lewis, J (1984), *Industrialisation and Trade Union Organisation in South Africa 1924-1955: The Rise and Fall of the South African Trades and Labour Council*, (Cambridge, 1984, pp.23-28+ chapter 2)

⁵⁴² A survey done during 1925 showed that, even in the same Province, the transferred institutions were managed under a variety of ordinances and under many different forms of control. See Union of South Africa (1926), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1925*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.75).

subsequent development of a national system of industrial trade schools⁵⁴³ (for ‘white’ children).

The evolution of a uniform system of control

From 1925 nineteen state institutions and twenty-three state-aided ‘industrial’ institutions were transferred to Union control. Of these, many small uneconomic (provincial) industrial schools were shut down and their pupils transferred to other institutions. These included many of the farm industrial schools and single-teacher industrial departments attached to Indigent Boarding House schools. Several of the other industrial schools were re-organised and converted into housecraft, commercial and agricultural high schools in rural areas, while some state-aided industrial schools remained subsidised institutions (till the 1970s).⁵⁴⁴

Malherbe has noted that during the 1920s the Union Education Department established vocational schools that sought to serve areas mostly outside the main metropolitan centres (namely, rural areas).⁵⁴⁵ They were basically of three types: (a) technical; (b) commercial; and (c) housecraft. These schools “developed as a response to the large number of ‘white’ farm children in the late 1920s who left school on completion of the compulsory school standard, or on reaching the compulsory school age, and returned to the farm without any specific training in agriculture”.⁵⁴⁶ This group of institutions of the Union Education Department

⁵⁴³ The term ‘trade schools’ was replaced by the term ‘technical high schools’ in 1944. See Rickett (1971), p.100; also pp.93-100. Also see Union of South Africa (1946), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for the Years 1941-1945*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.5). Rickett has noted that technical colleges had come to fall under the jurisdiction of the Union Education Department in 1923, and that from 1927 the technical colleges sought to establish as part of their institutions, technical high schools. These schools had an important influence on the eventual ‘raising’ of the standard of courses taught at trade schools since, at the technical high school, great emphasis was placed on general, formative education, but as many as 20 hours out of the 36-hour week at school were devoted to workshop training. Because the teachers employed at technical colleges were ‘supposedly’ better qualified than those at trade schools, technical high schools were regarded as ‘more advanced’ than trade schools. In 1944 there were only nine technical high schools. By that year however, trade schools had “gradually raised their standards” so that “the term technical high school was substituted for trade school in 1944”, and included both sets of institutions under that title thenceforth.

⁵⁴⁴ Malherbe (1977), p.178 Also see De Villiers Commission Report (1948), pp.9-10; Rickett (1971), pp.90-91

⁵⁴⁵ Malherbe (1977), p.178

⁵⁴⁶ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.97

provided board and training for children between the ages of 14-18 years old, with the proviso that the student had passed standard VI.

The number of students at these vocational schools increased substantially under the control of the Union Education Department (though comparatively, the numbers were still very small). 'White' student enrolment at vocational schools rose from 2,211 to 12,423 between 1926 and 1947.⁵⁴⁷

Nonetheless, Malherbe has noted that of those 'white' boys and girls who 'graduated' from these (vocational) schools⁵⁴⁸ in 1931, only 53% worked in the jobs they were trained for. This was "the result of the little recognition afforded the training in these institutions by organised industry,"⁵⁴⁹ as well as the tendency by new manufacturing industries to employ cheaper unskilled 'non-white' labour.

Uniformity amongst industrial schools

The Secretary for the Union Education Department reported in 1925 that much work was required in settling the conditions of control and assistance and in co-ordinating the whole system of industrial schools.⁵⁵⁰ Importantly, one of the significant outcomes of this process was the determination of a single Department Trade School Certificate for all pupils who passed out at provincial industrial schools (also called trade schools), as well as at government industrial schools.

Subsequently, all industrial school courses were to last three years which included two examinations - the Preliminary Technical certificate examination and the National Trades School Certificate examination. The Preliminary Technical Certificate course lasted one year and required that pupils have passed standard six. Subjects in this course included:-

⁵⁴⁷ Even more significantly, under the Apartheid Government from 1948, this number increased to 32,955 by 1967. See Malherbe (1977), p.712

⁵⁴⁸ From 1944 these institutions became known as housecraft high schools, commercial high schools and technical high schools.

⁵⁴⁹ Malherbe has noted that spokespeople for organised industries often expressed their general concern about the lack of applicability of the training offered at these institutions to the workplace. See Malherbe (1977), p.165.

⁵⁵⁰ Union Education Department officials inspected 36 industrial schools and provincial industrial (trades) schools that consequently fell under its jurisdiction. Union of South Africa (1926), *Annual*

- i) English or Afrikaans (first language)
- ii) Afrikaans or English (second language)
- iii) Technical drawing
- iv) Mathematics
- v) Science
- vi) Trade theory of relevant trade to individual child
- vii) Civics or History or Geography

The National Trades Certificate course was a two-year course that was divided into two parts:

- i) A written examination that required fluency in Engineering Drawing 1, Trade Theory 1, and Maths 1;
- ii) A practical work test that was conducted in workshops and included projects and course reports.⁵⁵¹

Yet, notwithstanding identical forms of trade instruction in trade schools and government industrial schools, from 1925 on it was generally claimed that children in government industrial schools were of lower intelligence than those in trade schools.

Within a differentiated system of education for 'white' children, this had particular significance. With the emergence of compulsory education for 'white' children in the early 1900's, handicrafts and 'practical work' had increasingly found its way into the curriculum of the ordinary 'white' school, especially at the primary level. From 1928, under the influence of 'progressive' curriculum models drawn from the USA, a concerted effort was made to introduce more 'vocational' subjects into the curricula of provincial secondary schools. That these subjects were inevitably used as alternative options for the less intellectually-gifted pupils at the secondary level⁵⁵² indicated the close association that was made by education policy makers between 'low' intelligence levels and vocational instruction.

'Non-primary Education' after 1925

The close association between low intelligence levels and vocational instruction represented particular dilemmas, especially given the nature of the Durban

Report of the Union Education Department for 1925, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.84)

⁵⁵¹ Rickett (1971), pp.88-90

⁵⁵² Malherbe (1977), p.165

Agreement of 1924 between the Union Education Department and the Provincial Education Departments. In terms of this ‘agreement’, the provincial education authorities were to be held responsible for all general, secondary, full-time education while the Union Education Department was thenceforth responsible for all full-time and part-time vocational education.⁵⁵³

While the ‘agreement’ was secured mainly for financial reasons (the costs of providing industrial training was very inhibiting to provincial administrations), the resulting dual control of education further concretised the division in the South African education system between general, academic education and vocational education.⁵⁵⁴ As vocational education and industrial schools under the Union Education Department had previously been primarily associated with criminality, deviance and indigency, industrial education after 1925 struggled to shake off the stigma that it was primarily geared for the uneducated, poorly nourished offspring of ‘poor whites’. Malherbe notes that an “aura of charity” and “rehabilitation” dogged the subsequent growth of industrial education under the Union Education Department.⁵⁵⁵

Furthermore, Rickett observed that:

Principals of other schools were well aware of this and, in many cases through ignorance of the progress made at vocational schools, labeled these schools as inferior and advised parents not to send their children to them. Particularly was this in the case of average and above-average pupils. Hence it was that many children who would have benefited from a vocational education were kept from it and, in all too many cases, left school at the earliest opportunity for lack of interest in or ability to cope with the subjects of the ordinary high school curriculum.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵³ All education other than general, academic education under provincial authorities was deemed to be ‘higher education’. See De Villiers Commission (1948), p.10

⁵⁵⁴ See remarks by Clarke in early part of the chapter (p. 3)

⁵⁵⁵ Malherbe (1977), p.178

⁵⁵⁶ Rickett (1971), p.24

This caused great consternation amongst educationalists, teachers and instructors. So much so that the Union Education Department actually contemplated handing back (previous provincial) industrial schools to the provinces in the 1930s.⁵⁵⁷

Nonetheless, Secretary for Education, Dr. Gie, asserted in 1932 that despite the problems associated with the division of functions vis-a-vis provincial and union authorities, the status of vocational schools was gradually and significantly raised under the control of the Union Education Department. He noted that:

The Union Education Department was the first educational authority that gave the problem of vocational education in South Africa such well-informed, careful and sympathetic attention...Under the Provinces the vocational schools were regarded as poor schools...in these schools instruction was not graded, and the cultural background of the children was neglected. (After 1925, for the first time) the Union Education Department drew up properly graded courses of workshop practice and of trade theory to go with practice; and a study of languages and of cultural subjects was gradually introduced.⁵⁵⁸

The Union Education Department was likewise responsible for gradually “creating the machinery for the (subsequent) co-ordination of teacher-training activities, vocational guidance and the after-care of children through juvenile boards, as well as increased educational facilities for indigent children and those with anti-social traits”.⁵⁵⁹

From the 1930s, alongside rapid differentiation within the ‘white’ educational system, and a growing choice of subjects being offered at the various points of provision, the educational authorities also sought to address the ‘indigency and inferiority’ stigma of vocational education. Aware that industrial and technical education was generally associated with ‘the weak and maimed’, the Union Education Department was particularly concerned about the narrow conception of vocational education at the different points of provision. This raised critical issues

⁵⁵⁷ Union of South Africa (1933), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1932*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.5). The offer was refused however based on financial considerations. See Union of South Africa (1935), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1933-4*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, pp.7-8)

⁵⁵⁸ Report of Union Education Department (1933), p.5

⁵⁵⁹ Rickett (1971), p.29

about the relationship between vocational education, work and society, as well as about the effectiveness of the social reproduction of work discipline within the system of industrial and technical training.

The boom in secondary industry from the middle to late 1930s led to increased attempts by the educational authorities to further re-organise the system of industrial and technical education in South Africa. By 1939, with the start of World War II, South Africa was faced with unprecedented industrial expansion that drew particular attention to the unsatisfactory state of vocational education. Despite the attempts to address the growing gulf between the provision of industrial and technical education and the availability of trained technical workers, the union government was constrained by social and political choices that emanated from the historical development of industrial education. (Industrial and vocational education was loosely associated with the indigence and “lack of mental prowess” of ‘poor whites’).

Nonetheless, by 1945 industrial and technical education for ‘white’ children (as seen in the technical, commercial, housecraft and agricultural high schools in the rural areas and the popularity of vocational subjects in secondary and high school curricula in urban areas) was enjoying rising status. As noted by the De Villiers Commission in 1948, much effort was being made at that time “to raise the level of scholastic work done in these institutions”, as well as to “generally ‘improve’ the type of girl and boy admitted to them”.⁵⁶⁰

ii) Technical Education.

As previously noted, the history of industrial education in South Africa had significantly different origins to that of technical education. Technical education institutions evolved mainly in response to the growing needs of the railways, mining and industries for trained and skilled artisans. It was therefore more localised; ie the

⁵⁶⁰ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.13

courses offered developed in response to the local, industrial and commercial needs of particular areas.

However, with the *Higher Education Act of 1923* all institutions for technical training were brought under the control of the Union Education Department. And from 1925, alongside increased facilities for vocational schooling and the introduction of vocational subjects into the curricula of provincial secondary schools, the work done in technical colleges became directly linked to the general functions of provincial schools, ie to provide 'training for work'.⁵⁶¹ From this date the technical colleges started establishing technical high schools that offered pre-apprenticeship training, with the entrance qualification being a pass in Standard VI. This course initially lasted two years and included a mixture of 'academic' and 'vocational' subjects (humanities, maths, science, art, mechanical drawing and manual training in woodwork).⁵⁶² However, with time, other trade training courses in metalwork, electrical work, fitting and turning were added to the syllabus. By 1936 the course pursued at technical high schools was extended to three years and was very similar to that followed at 'trade' schools (though 'of a higher quality').

Significantly, the technical colleges and their technical high schools were situated primarily in the large urban centres and catered almost exclusively for the 'town' boy and girl. Born out of the needs associated with increased industrialisation and commercialisation, these technical institutions became very popular among 'white' working urban-dwellers, who sought to either further their 'skills' or do their apprenticeships part-time.⁵⁶³ Malherbe describes the part-time facilities of technical colleges as follows:

Technical colleges provide further education for the boy or girl who has to leave school early to go to employment and needs part-time education to

⁵⁶¹ Union of South Africa (1929), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1928 (UG 51-1929)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.5)

⁵⁶² The first technical high school (a Day Continuation School for Boys) was established by the Durban Technical Institute in 1910. However, this type of pre-apprenticeship school found little favour outside Natal. The other Provinces at that stage preferred the 'trade' school. See Rickett (1971), p.94

⁵⁶³ The Transvaal Technical Institute for example in 1950 boasted of a total enrolment of 26 500 students (full-and part-time). See Malherbe (1977), p.169

supplement curtailed full-time education; further education for the boy or girl whose special interests and abilities justify secondary education with a vocational bias; further education for the adult who finds he is inadequately prepared for his post or for promotion; further education for the matriculant who wishes to become a pharmacist, commercial artist (etc).....⁵⁶⁴

Governed by the requirements of the Apprenticeship Act of 1922 (that stipulated compulsory attendance at technical classes) and informed at the local level about the needs of particular environments, these colleges stood at the forefront of provision for the technical educational needs of town and fee-paying students.

Yet, paradoxically, technical colleges were also the only institutions at the time providing technical instruction to 'non-white' children⁵⁶⁵. The De Villiers Commission observed in 1948 that 'coloured' workers contributed "considerably to the building operations of the towns in that they lived."⁵⁶⁶ Technical colleges like the Cape Town College (at a branch in Roeland Street) had by 1950 provided facilities for up to one thousand 'coloured' students, who were mainly apprentices in the furniture and building trades.⁵⁶⁷ (Until the 1960s the only other facilities that could provide technical or industrial education to 'coloured' boys were the 'coloured' Schools of Industries, the Reformatories and the 'coloured' centres attached to the Centre for Technical Training (COTT) for ex-volunteer soldiers.)

During the inter-war period then the Union Education Department had constantly grappled with the problem of where exactly to place its limited resources. Its commitment to promoting vocational education for young 'white' adolescents from the 1930s provided particular dilemmas for the Union Education Department. By the outbreak of World War II however, both industrialists and educationalists were

⁵⁶⁴ Malherbe (1977), p.173

⁵⁶⁵ Trade training was however also provided at state-aided vocational schools. In 1948 there were 15 of these institutions and of those 10 were for 'non-whites'. Of these only the Midland Trade School at Graaff-Reinet and the St.Josephs Trade School at Aliwal North provided for 'coloured' boys. Most of the vocational schools for 'non-whites' were run by the Roman Catholic and Methodist missions and thus had a strong religious background. See Union of South Africa (1948), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for the Calendar Years 1946-7 (UG 41-1948)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.14).

⁵⁶⁶ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.252

⁵⁶⁷ In 1962 however, the enrolment of all 'non-whites' in technical colleges was terminated, in line with apartheid policy. See Malherbe (1977), p.188.

stressing the unsatisfactory 'condition' of industrial and technical education in South Africa. With regard to the general perception of vocational education as 'inferior' and for the 'lower classes', the war brought to light the country's need for trained technical workers and emphasised the degree of reform that was still required. The war also brought under sharp focus previous policies that determined that industrial and technical education only be provided for 'white' students.

The Government Industrial School System and technical training

It has been stated previously that government industrial schools were established to service 'poor white' youths 'in need of care'. These children were generally considered to be in danger of 'falling into crime or destitution' as a result of adverse circumstances. They were sent to government industrial schools via the Children's Protection Act of 1913 (amended in 1937). The Children's Act also regulated those children in certified institutions (orphanages) and hostels, as well as in non-certified institutions (private children's homes).

All children over the age of fourteen deemed by the courts to be 'in need of care' were directly committed to government industrial schools. If younger, they were generally committed to certified and non-certified state institutions (Children's Homes). However, when children in certified and non-certified institutions reached the age of fourteen, they were immediately transferred to government industrial schools for the purposes of learning a trade. A Union Report on 'maladjusted' and 'uncontrollable' children noted in 1934 that:

Most of the children in industrial schools were transferred from certified and non-certified institutions at the age of 15 for the purpose of trade training. (While) the quality of the trade training was generally satisfactory, the trades taught were not always in keeping with the pupils' abilities. (However), to a great extent the dissatisfaction expressed regarding the quality of the training may be explained in terms of the quality of the human material with which the schools must work. In some institutions the number of subnormals was as much as 40% of the school population. The Committee therefore recommended that admission to industrial schools be restricted to children of normal intelligence capable of profiting from academic education and trade training.⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁶⁸ Union of South Africa (1937), *Report of the Inter-departmental Committee on Destitute, Neglected,*

Linda Chisholm has noted that the conflation of the issues of delinquency, mental defect and poverty in the minds of educators and policy makers in the early 1930s had a direct impact on the nature of industrial education provision in South Africa.⁵⁶⁹ From this time the impact of the developing ‘sciences’ of mental health and IQ testing provided for far greater classification and segregation of ‘mentally defective’ and ‘maladjusted’ children. With regard to industrial schools, the notion of a ‘mentally deficient’ child emphasised in policy makers’ minds the need to provide differentiated educational programmes within the industrial schools system⁵⁷⁰. Thus, the Union Education Department asserted in 1937 that:

The starting of a special institution for subnormal industrial-school boys must be regarded as an important advance. The presence of a relatively high percentage of subnormals at some industrial schools for boys has presented serious difficulties...in the workshop the subnormals often present difficulties because the course is too advanced and too exacting. The starting of the special institution at Dewetsdorp (known as Meadows School of Industries) will now bring the subnormal boys into their own, and the best opportunities will be created for them of developing what limited ability they enjoy. To the ordinary industrial school the removal of the subnormals will bring great relief, and it will now be able to raise the general standard of the work in the school as well as in the workshop to a higher level.⁵⁷¹

Nonetheless, the Union Education Department noted in 1938 that only a small proportion (28%) of the pupils at government industrial schools were actually in need of rehabilitative treatment. The others were ordinary boys and girls for whom “a place needed to be won in the economic structure of society”. Trade training (for

Maladjusted and Delinquent Children and Young Persons 1934-1937 (UG 38-1937), (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.36-7). Also see UG 41-1948, p.33. The report notes that 462 children were transferred to government industrial schools from certified or non-certified institutions in 1945, compared to 213 who were direct committals by Children’s Court Commissioners

⁵⁶⁹ Chisholm (1989), p.255

⁵⁷⁰ Fick, ML (1936), *The Intelligence of Dependent Children*, (Pretoria, Van Schaik: National Bureau of Educational and Social Research, pp.24-39). Fick, Director of the National Bureau of Educational and Social Research, rated all dependent children under the Union Education Department according to levels of intelligence, and then judged the suitability of the education and training provided to them by the Department in the light of his findings. For example, Fick ‘examined’ pupils in trade, housecraft, agricultural and government industrial schools and found that there was a greater concentration of ‘subnormals’ in the latter. He then suggested what level of trade training should be provided.

⁵⁷¹ Union of South Africa (1938), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1937 (UG 51-1938)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.29-30)

boys) in these institutions was deemed to be very “important for character building, but it also needed to ‘empower’ the pupil for bread-winning purposes”.⁵⁷² By 1947 all government industrial schools for ‘white’ children were graded according to the characteristics of the pupils. Training suitable to their respective aptitudes and interests were generally based on levels of intelligence⁵⁷³:

Type	Sex	Training	Accommodation available
Normal intelligence	Boys	Commercial	24
Normal intelligence	Boys	Technical	1030
Normal intelligence	Girls	Commercial	40
Normal intelligence	Girls	Housecraft	500
Subnormal intelligence	Boys	Varied	330
Subnormal intelligence	Girls	varied	150
Behaviour deviates	Boys	varied	85
Behaviour deviates	Girls	varied	50
Total number:			2,209

Government Industrial Schools in the 1940s

The following government industrial schools were being maintained by the Union Education Department in 1947:

Government Industrial Schools for ‘whites’:⁵⁷⁴

Name of School	Province	Type of pupil	School level
1. Heidelberg School of Industries	Transvaal	Normal boys	All standards
2. George School of Industries	Cape Province	Normal boys	Ex.standard VI

⁵⁷² Union of South Africa (1939), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1938 (UG 59-1939)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.16)

⁵⁷³ UG 41-1948, p.17

⁵⁷⁴ UG 41-1948, p.17

3. Vaal River School of Industries	Standerton, Transvaal	Normal boys	All standards
4. Kingwilliamstown School of Industries	Cape Province	Normal boys	All standards
5. Queenstown School of Industries	Cape Province	Normal boys	All standards
6. Meadows School of Industries	Orange Free State	Subnormal boys	All standards
7. JW Luckhoff Opportunity School	Heidelberg, Transvaal	Subnormal boys	All standards
8. Rustenburg School of Industries	Transvaal	Behaviour deviates	All standards
9. Tempe School of Industries	Orange Free State	Normal girls	Ex.standard VI
10. Paarl School of Industries	Cape Province	Normal girls	Ex.standard VI
11. George Hofmeyr School	Standerton, Transvaal	Normal girls	All standards
12. “Die Vlakte”	Standerton, Transvaal	Subnormal girls	All standards
13. Eendrag School	Ladybrand, Transvaal	Subnormal girls	All standards
14. Oudtshoorn School of Industries	Cape Province	Subnormal girls	All standards
15. Knysna School of Industries	Cape Province	Behaviour deviates	All standards

Chisholm has argued that “the widening racial division of labour in the wider society” generally shaped the training and schooling components of government industrial school programmes in South Africa. With respect to the provision of industrial and technical education, policy choices in the 1930s had weighed heavily in favour of programmes that focused on the social salvation of ‘poor whites’. From the early 1940s, however, the emphasis in ‘white’ male institutions shifted markedly

towards certification, to providing pupils with trade certification that would ensure their employability. Despite the growing influence of ‘scientific’ methods of classification (mental deficiency, IQ levels) within industrial school policy, these institutions were sharply focused on providing their students with ‘skills’ to compete in the labour market. That they were inevitably only equipped for unskilled or low-skilled work was offset by an Apprenticeship Act that heavily disadvantaged other ‘competitors’ in the labour market.

How effective was this trade training?

It is significant that pupils at government industrial schools wrote the same examinations as those at vocational high schools. The De Villiers Commission noted in 1948 that:

The training in these (industrial) schools, in addition to the ordinary subjects, comprised of various trades for the boys and domestic science for the girls. (And) the syllabi followed approximated to those for the vocational high schools. Also, pupils sit for the same examinations.⁵⁷⁵

Nonetheless, only 41,5% of the ‘white’ children that left government industrial schools in 1951 took up work in the trade that they had been taught. The majority of pupils (48.5%) either could not find work in their trade or chose to work in another trade. By 1954 the number of pupils who were working in their taught-trade had only risen to 48.8%.⁵⁷⁶

Particulars concerning Pupils who left the Government Industrial Schools⁵⁷⁷ (Schools of Industries) in 1951 and 1954:

Occupation	Work in taught trade 1951	Work in other trade 1951	Total	Work in taught trade 1954	Work in other trade 1954	Total
Baking	8	13	21	4	4	8
Blacksmithing	2	4	6	2	4	6
Boot/shoemaking	3	26	29	3	7	10

⁵⁷⁵ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.10

⁵⁷⁶ Union of South Africa (1954), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1952 (UG 12-1954)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.51). Also see Union of South Africa (1956), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1955 (UG 20-1956)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.35)

⁵⁷⁷ UG 41-1948, p.19

Bricklaying and plastering	22	28	50	21	43	64
Cabinetmaking	6	5	11	6	9	15
Carpentry and Joinery	20	20	40	18	54	72
Commerce	21	1	22	33		33
Engineering	2	4	6	--	--	
Farming	-	-	-	--	--	
Fitting and turning	5	2	7	12	8	20
Motor work	6	-	6	6	1	7
Painting	16	22	38	17	14	31
Plumbing and sheetmetal work	7	20	27	14	9	23
Tailoring	10	20	30	6	8	14
Upholstery	2	1	3	1	2	3
Woodwork	20	27	47	--	--	
Housecraft	101	101	202	175	27	202
Percentage	41.5%	48.5%	(90%)	48.8%	30.18%	(79%)



This emphasised the envisaged position of the pupils of government industrial schools in South African society. Chisholm notes that:

Although industrial schools were linked to the state's 'white labour' policy, there was not a direct connection between the state's interest in these schools, and what they actually produced...(that) although industrial schools were a class specific form of schooling within the overall 'white' educational edifice, designed for the children of the dangerous classes, they did not turn their charges into skilled workers. They did, however, attempt to imbue them with values suitable for disciplined labour, and patriotic, militarist dispositions.⁵⁷⁸

This is particularly instructive when comparisons are made with the number of pupils in state vocational schools who were able to secure work in their taught-trade. In the case of the pupils from commercial, housecraft and technical high schools, more than 75% of them were able to secure jobs in the trade that they were taught.⁵⁷⁹

Particulars concerning Pupils who left the Vocational High Schools (Technical, Commercial and Housecraft High Schools) in 1951 and 1954:

Occupation	Work in taught trade 1951	Work in other trade 1951	Total	Work in taught trade 1954	Work in other trade 1954	Total
Blacksmithing	33	3	36	33	2	35
Electrician work	44	1	45	44	10	54
Bricklaying and Plastering	52	2	54	71	9	80
Cabinetmaking	71	6	77	91	23	114
Carpentry and Joinery	58	3	61	99	9	108
Commerce	358	--	358	385	112	497
Farm Mechanics	7	--	7	48	3	51
Building	15	2	17	9	5	14
Fitting and turning	30	1	31	85	18	103
Motor work	115	7	122	154	16	170
Painting	18	1	19	10	--	10
Plumbing	25	4	29	19	6	25
Tailoring	21	--	21	9	2	11

⁵⁷⁸ Chisholm (1989), p.270

⁵⁷⁹ UG 12-1954, p.78 and UG 20-1956, p.61

Woodwork	65	3	68	--	--	--
Wagonbuilding	11	--	11			
Upholstery	25	3	28	5	4	9
Housecraft	204	70	274	164	54	218
Percentage	88.15%	8.1%	(96.25%)	73.72%	16.42%	(90%)

Furthermore, the trades pursued at 'white' government industrial schools reflected the jobs that were 'made available' for unskilled 'mentally backward' pre-delinquents. For example, when the curriculum of the 'coloured' government industrial school (after 1948) is compared to that of 'white' industrial schools, it is noteworthy that despite the supposed-dominance of 'coloureds' in the building and furniture trades, many of these trades were also available to 'white pupils' till the 1970s, when they slowly disappeared from the curriculum of the 'white' government industrial school/school of industries.

Industrial and technical training needs during World War II

The Union Education Department noted in 1948 that:

At the outbreak of World War II, South Africa was cut off from overseas supplies to an alarming degree, and plans had to be made to cater for her own needs and, in particular, to meet the enormous demands for technical equipment to carry on a war that, as soon became apparent, would be waged by technical weapons on an unprecedented scale. It was estimated that the Union would require 20,000 technicians to maintain the production level deemed necessary. In order to undertake this gigantic task the Union had to train her own technicians.⁵⁸⁰

During the war, South African industries boomed. As with World War I foreign supplies were completely cut off and South Africa was forced to turn to its own resources. As the war was expected to last for many years, it was increasingly felt necessary that the South African economy focus on becoming independent. Callinicos has argued that:

At this stage of its development, South Africa was well-placed for enormous growth. Iscor was already producing the iron and steel needed to make machinery; coal and electric power were available and cheap; and there was enough capital from the gold boom to start all these new projects. In the six

⁵⁸⁰ Union of South Africa (1948), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for the Years 1941-1945* (UG 39-1948), (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.4)

years between 1939 and 1945 manufacturing nearly doubled its output (so that) by 1943 it was producing more of the country's wealth than gold mining.⁵⁸¹

Furthermore, Terreblanche and Natrass have argued that World War II effectively made the colour bar economically redundant.⁵⁸² The loss of most skilled labour to the army, coupled with the 'more liberal' policy thrusts of the United Party with regard to labour regulations in this period, resulted in the government increasingly authorising 'non-whites' to work in skilled positions in industry. Economic pressures during the war drew more and more 'non-whites' into skilled labour, so that by the end of the war 'non-white' labour was virtually indispensable to the production of goods in both primary and secondary sectors of the South African economy.⁵⁸³

William Beinart notes that of the 125,000 people absorbed into manufacturing and construction employment during the Second World War, only 15% were 'white'. State policy makers were therefore well aware of the significant increase in 'non-white' urban workers in secondary industries in this period, as well as of the overtaking of mining by manufacturing both in its share of the country's GDP and in employment. After the war, the concerns of manufacturers about new markets and a more settled labour force then became a greater priority of the United Party-run state.⁵⁸⁴

The war effort and the move to Apartheid

In the period 1937-48, developing policies of segregation emerged alongside an unprecedented growth in industry, and the rapid urbanisation that accompanied this. Driven by the war effort, the Union Government in this period struggled to overcome or reconcile the different pressures and contradictions inherent in its

⁵⁸¹ Callinicos, L (1994), 'New factories, new workers', in Webster E, Alfred L, Bethlehem L, Joffe A, Selikow, TA (eds), *Work and Industrialisation in South Africa—an Introductory Reader*, (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, p.220)

⁵⁸² Terreblanche S & Natrass, N (1994), 'A periodisation of the political economy from 1910', in Webster, Alfred et al (1994), p.195

⁵⁸³ Smollan, R (ed) (1986), *Black Advancement in the South African Economy*, (Johannesburg, Macmillan South Africa, p.9)

⁵⁸⁴ Beinart, W (1994), *Twentieth-century South Africa*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, p.124)

'liberalisation' policy. Policy makers in this period therefore readily conceded that they needed to graft 'new' policies onto old 'established' ones with great care.

David Duncan has argued that the way in that the Union Government grappled with the problems of industrialisation and urbanisation after the Second World War was the central reason why the Malanite nationalist challenge gained the degree of momentum that it did.⁵⁸⁵ In the 1948 election the United Party lost a fair amount of support in peri-urban areas where the threat of the 'non-white' working class was perceived to be especially acute. 'Whites' coming back from the war had found the jobs that had previously been their 'domain' generally occupied by 'non-whites'. Beinart has similarly noted that the period of relative openness during and immediately after the Second World War contributed significantly to the Nationalist Party's victory in 1948. While many 'whites' in this period emerged from the 'war for democracy' believing that 'non-white' aspirations had to be taken into account,⁵⁸⁶ "most responded to the wartime challenges from 'non-whites' (in the labour market) by moving ideologically in the other direction." Thus, Deborah Posel has noted that apartheid policies after 1948:

Were forged through a series of struggles within and beyond the state, that forced the architects of state policy to adapt and revise many of their original strategies. Uncertainties, conflicts, failures, and deviations, although often less invisible than the continuities and triumphs of Apartheid, were fundamental to its development.⁵⁸⁷

Policies initiated immediately after World War II were therefore constituted and organised within a framework of ambiguity. In this period, policies sought to respond not only to the requirements of increased industrialisation and urbanisation,

⁵⁸⁵ Duncan, D (1995), *The Mills of God: The State and African Labour in South Africa 1918-1948*, (Johannesburg, Wits University Press, p.13). Beinart (1994), pp.132-134

⁵⁸⁶ Duncan argued that a major factor behind the support for 'non-white' state-sponsored relief (for the poor and underprivileged) arose from 'white' perceptions of 'non-white' living conditions in and around 'white' urban areas. Besides being an outrage to the 'white' conscience, the spread of slum conditions, malnutrition and disease among 'non-white' people was regarded as a danger to the 'white' community and therefore required remedial action by the state. On the other hand, "while the state was alive to the need for social stability and to the possibilities of legitimating itself in the eyes of diverse groups", it sought to balance the "extension of health and welfare provision against the danger of going too far" and thus alienating the 'white' taxpayer and worker. See Duncan (1995), p.72 and p.90.

⁵⁸⁷ Posel, D (1991), *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise*, (Oxford, Oxford

but also rising disaffection among the ‘white’ working class and Afrikaner Nationalists.

The Report of the Commission on Technical and Vocational Education of 1948

Appointed in 1945 by the Governor-General of the Union of South Africa, the De Villiers Commission of 1948 was asked to investigate what were the most suitable methods of training for industry, “ having regard to the role of apprenticeship and learnership in such training, and the providing of facilities therefor”.⁵⁸⁸

Yet, while it sought to address the serious deficiencies of the industrial and vocational educational system of the Union (that included a lack of technical training for ‘non-whites’), the De Villiers Commission was nevertheless also concerned to frame its recommendations within the logic and previous development of these services in South Africa.

‘Coloureds’ and technical training after World War II

Malherbe has asserted that there were two main reasons why the provision of industrial and technical education had not been extended to ‘coloured’ children as a means to advance the industrial development of the country during the inter-war years. These were:

- 1) The limited field of apprenticeship for ‘coloured’ children;
- 2) The poor economic condition of the ‘coloured’ population.⁵⁸⁹

The Department of Social Welfare claimed in 1943 that “the ‘coloured’ person’s low standard of living, meagre and inferior education and the obstruction of race and class barriers was *mainly responsible* for preventing the entry of large numbers of ‘coloured’ people into the skilled manual and ‘white-collar’ occupations.”⁵⁹⁰ The De

University Press, p.5)

⁵⁸⁸ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.1

⁵⁸⁹ Malherbe (1977), p.191

⁵⁹⁰ Union of South Africa (1943), *Report of a Committee of Enquiry Appointed to Enquire into Conditions Existing on the Cape Flats and Similarly-affected Areas in the Cape Division in 1942 (UG 18-1943)*, (Pretoria, Department of Social Welfare: Government Printer, pp.39-42)

Villiers Commission in 1948 was critical of the lack of facilities for technical education for ‘non-whites’. For example, it noted that the scanty facilities for vocational training simply did not enable the “outstanding workers amongst the ‘coloured’ people to become skilled craftsmen, foremen and building contractors”.⁵⁹¹

Based on the ‘liberal approach’ of the post-World War II United Party, policy makers after 1945 increasingly focused on the aspirations of the ‘non-white’ urban population, but did so mostly in the context of urban problems like crime, social ordering, labour strikes and the increase in squatting. For example, greater attention was given to the eradication of ‘the skolly-boy’ in Cape Town in this period. The ‘skolly-boy’ problem was regarded as a product of a system that could not provide labour for young ‘coloured’ boys leaving school. The De Villiers Commission noted that “as they cannot earn a living, (these young ‘coloured’ skollies) proceed to prey on society by such operations as bag-snatching, petty theft, etc., forming themselves into gangs and resorting to violence”.⁵⁹² The Commission thus recommended the use of *a camp training system* where minimum general education and systematic vocational training could be provided under favourable conditions:

Even if all the necessary facilities were available, there would still be a large percentage of juveniles who would not be able to make use of them because of economic or other circumstances. There will always be at least for many years to come many thousands of ‘native’ (and ‘coloured’) youth who will have to start work at a very early age. They will be ill-equipped for it or to meet the many problems of their environment. As a result many will lose their work, wander about aimlessly and gradually drift into various forms of delinquency.⁵⁹³

The Commission stressed that:

We need some sort of system to deal with the large proportion of ‘non-europeans’ between the ages of 14-18 who are not catered for by the existing post-primary educational facilities. These vast numbers are not equipped for life or work. They live at a low level, and are inefficient workers. Many become a burden upon the state as offenders or paupers. It is of paramount

⁵⁹¹ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.252. Also see Malherbe (1977), p.191

⁵⁹² De Villiers Commission (1948), p.253

⁵⁹³ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.247 and 253

importance that steps be taken at once to prevent this waste of the country's human resources by providing some sort of training....until such time that adequate educational and vocational facilities have been established, camp training centres offer the best solution to this problem.⁵⁹⁴

'Coloured' Poverty and Apprenticeship

While it was recognised that work had to be 'created' for the 'non-white' urban unemployed to "enable them to enter the ranks of the workers and be self-supporting,"⁵⁹⁵ securing skilled manual jobs in this period was basically determined by the prevailing system of apprenticeship. (The provision of all basic technical training was likewise intimately linked to the apprenticeship system of the country).

The De Villiers Commission observed that:

- 1) The educational requirements of apprenticeship made it much more difficult for 'coloured' youths to be apprenticed as compared to 'white' youth;
- 2) Apprenticeship committees generally 'favoured' 'white' youths and awarded the majority of apprenticeships to them.⁵⁹⁶

Noting that the opportunities for employment for the 'coloured' section of the population had shrunk in the period 1924-1948, the De Villiers Commission asserted that policy makers needed to concede the limits of providing technical training for 'coloured' youth. The Commission asserted that the non-availability of apprenticeships for 'coloured' youth was directly linked to the poor economic condition of the 'coloured' population, and thus argued that technical education initiatives increasingly focus and deal with the poverty and aimlessness of the children of the 'submerged coloured groups'.⁵⁹⁷

'Coloureds' and technical education

In the period 1948-1960 there was a very limited increase in both the facilities and funds made available for the trade training of 'coloured' youths. Notwithstanding the establishment by the churches of a number of state-subsidised *vocational* schools

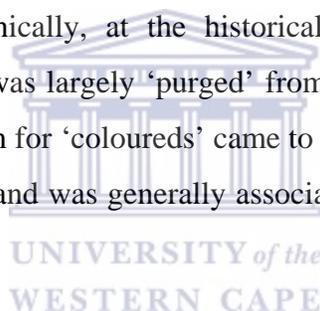
⁵⁹⁴ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.247

⁵⁹⁵ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.253

⁵⁹⁶ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.257. Malherbe notes that even when 'coloured' youths seeking apprenticeship exhibited 'superior' intelligence to their 'white' counterparts, they were nonetheless overlooked (in favour of 'white' youths). See Malherbe (1977), p.191

in the period 1960-1971, the total amount of the state grants-in-aid to technical institutions in one year represented a negligible fraction of the total amount spent on 'coloured' education. (Between R11, 000 and R20,000 was provided in 1965 for state-aided vocational schools, compared to a total amount of R59 million for 'coloured' education.)⁵⁹⁸

Malherbe has noted however that from the 1960s the state embarked on the establishment of a number of state technical colleges and technical high schools for 'coloureds'. However, because the limited number of institutions did not have the facilities or the trained teachers required for vocational training, many 'coloured' secondary school pupils specifically chose *not to pursue* technical training courses.⁵⁹⁹ Also, the nature and type of technical education that was provided for 'coloured' children after 1948 discouraged many 'coloured' children from pursuing technical vocations. Ironically, at the historical juncture when the stigma of indigency and inferiority was largely 'purged' from the 'white' technical education system, technical education for 'coloureds' came to be regarded as the domain of the 'coloured' working class, and was generally associated with 'coloured' poverty and crime.



The Centre for Technical Training (COTT) as an example of 'training camps'

One of the important effects (for technical training) of the participation of South Africa in World War II was the establishment of a Centre for Technical Training under the auspices of the Department of Defence in 1940.⁶⁰⁰

The Minister of Education noted in 1948 that:

In November 1939, representatives of the Department of Defence, the Department of Labour, the Union Education Department and nine technical colleges in the Union had also attended a conference in Pretoria with a view to drawing up plans to meet this national emergency (caused by the war). At

⁵⁹⁷ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.256-7

⁵⁹⁸ Malherbe (1977), p.191

⁵⁹⁹ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.56

⁶⁰⁰ See Section A

this conference details were worked out for the establishment of a Central Organisation for Technical Training (C.O.T.T.).⁶⁰¹

The COTT scheme, started under the pressure of these wartime conditions, subsequently exercised an influence of the utmost importance on the (future) scope, capacity and duration of technical training in South Africa. Attached to each technical college, these centres (operational by June 1940) provided facilities that sought to train almost 5,000 students in trades such as:

Fitters, machine tool operators, welders, blacksmiths, tool repairers, electricians and sheet metal workers. Men between the ages of 18-40 were admitted to courses that generally lasted 24 weeks.⁶⁰²

By the end of 1943 over 21,909 had been trained at the various COTT centres. In June 1945 the COTT was taken over (from the Department of Defence) by the Union Education Department for the purpose of training 'white' ex-volunteers as bricklayers, plasterers, carpenters, plumbers, painters, electricians and motor mechanics, as well as fitters, turners, welders, and blacksmiths. Up to this time the COTT had been training men in trades primarily allied to the engineering industry. From 1945 the programmes of the COTT centres focused on the building trades. It was argued that there were greater work opportunities in that field given the economic boom that accompanied the war and the need for reconstruction. The change necessitated a large amount of work in preparing schemes of work, technical instruction material and trade tests. More importantly, after 1945, COTT policy also made provision for the establishment of centres for 'coloured' ex-soldiers. This was based on the belief that 'coloureds' 'traditionally' dominated the building industry in Cape Town, and was coupled to a desire to acknowledge the role of the great number of 'coloured' soldiers who had partaken in the war, where they had demonstrated not only their 'allegiance', but also their 'abilities'.⁶⁰³

By June 1945, 'coloured' ex-soldiers were provided with technical training at the COTT Centre No.14, which was located on the Ottery camp in Cape Town. They were trained in the building trade (346 'coloured' as opposed to 4,320 'whites'),

⁶⁰¹ UG 39-1948, p.4

⁶⁰² UG 39-1948, p.4

engineering trade (8 as opposed to 144 'whites'), tailoring (27), shoemaking (45), cooking (19), and catering (98).⁶⁰⁴ This training continued at the Ottery camp until mid-1947. The camp had been allocated by that time to be used as a school of industries for 'coloured' boys. In the period June to October 1947, the COTT centre was used as a trade-testing venue where the IQ levels and trade abilities of ex-volunteer 'coloured' soldiers in the building and furniture trades were measured (this only lasted for about 8 months).

The most significant aspect of the COTT scheme was its provision of *basic technical training* to a large number of young men and women. Based on mass production methods, this training differed from that in operation in trade and vocational schools. Whereas individual pupils at trade schools were encouraged to be able to create complete articles, students at COTT centres focused on making constituent parts of articles that were later assembled to form the completed article. The De Villiers Commission later reported that this type of "modern basic training of highly skilled operatives" served as a useful example of how a technical training scheme with a definite purpose and a sharp focus could be used.⁶⁰⁵

A confluence of ideas

By the end of the Second World War a great many 'coloured' men /youth had secured technical training for the first time. It is argued that, while technical training had been provided for some time at Porter Reformatory (limited) for 'delinquent' 'coloured' youth, the experience gained at the COTT centre at Ottery, Cape Town during the Second World War significantly impacted on technical education policy for 'non-whites' thenceforth. When the state subsequently

⁶⁰³ UG 41-1948, p.13

⁶⁰⁴ These trades represented roughly those occupations earmarked to be the domain of the 'coloured' working class for much of this century. See UG 41-1948, p.13-14. The Cape Technical College in 1945 had also identified these trades as the 'most suited' to labour market needs for 'coloureds'. See Pretoria Archives, (PA), *SAB UOD, Ref:E283/8/4//1/1, Vol. 1*, letter dated 18/12/1945. No training was provided for 'coloureds' in the motor trades, military training, or apprentice training at ISCOR. Also, no trade testing was done on 'coloured' ex-soldiers by this time (as opposed to tests on 2,716 'whites'). Trade training in the motor trades for 'non-whites' was strictly forbidden in terms of industrial legislation that was promoted by the 'white' Motor-Trade trade unions at that time.

⁶⁰⁵ De Villiers Commission (1948), p.142

addressed the possible establishment of a government industrial school for ‘coloured’ boys at Ottery, it focused on those kinds of technical training schemes that would not only serve a broad range of ‘coloured’ boys, but also address issues of ‘coloured’ poverty and crime.

A government industrial school for ‘coloured’ boys

Whereas from the 1930s ‘white’ children not regarded as a threat to social order were increasingly accommodated in a developing system of commercial, agricultural, housecraft, and technical high schools, no such differentiation was available for ‘coloured’ children in the 1950s. After 1948, instead of the variety of forms of vocational, technical and industrial education used to re-allocate ‘poor whites’ to (non-skilled) manual and semi-skilled positions after 1922, the provision of technical education for ‘coloured’ boys simply differentiated between the rural and urban child (and in urban areas between the ‘dangerous’ and normal, mostly indigent, working class child).

After the Second World War the Union Government had indicated a resolve to address the trade-training needs of ‘coloured’ children within the context of ‘coloured’ indigency and delinquency, especially in the urban areas. In this period trade training and ‘teaching people the habits of work’ were essential aspects of state policy. These policies were not only focused on the reconstruction of the South African economy, but also on how trade training could be used in relation to ‘disorganised’ and poor families.⁶⁰⁶ Yet, notwithstanding the establishment of a fairly co-ordinated system of industrial and technical schooling in South Africa by 1945, the degree of provision of technical education for ‘non-whites’ in the period 1948-1960 remained very limited. In urban areas, the only available technical

⁶⁰⁶ Chisholm notes that one of most important ways of ‘saving’ and ‘rehabilitating’ poor working class youth in this period was through education and training for a trade. At the time, with regard to the link between schools and work, policy makers in South Africa were greatly influenced by literature from the more industrialised countries. See Chisholm (1989), p.227. Also, Coffey has notes that among working class people in England the existence of long-term unemployment often made them utilitarian in their thinking about the form and content of secondary education. “They often preferred a grounding in technical drawing and workshop practice to a liberal educational programme for an able boy from a manual working background.” See Coffey, D (1992), *Schools and Work: Developments in Vocational Education*, (London, Cassell, p.144, also p.153)

education for 'coloureds' was provided at the technical colleges and at state-aided (church) vocational schools. The 'coloured' government industrial school at Ottery represented the only other non-penal state institution in that period that provided trade training for 'coloured' boys. It would seem therefore, if only for the period 1948-1960, that the union authorities sought to resolve much of urban 'coloured needs' (both trade training and social) within the context and establishment of a 'coloured' government industrial school.

In the 1950s, under the apartheid government, the provision of technical education for 'coloureds' was primarily premised on its effectiveness as a means of 'social salvation' and as a tool for teaching the 'coloured underclass' 'habits of industry'. This is especially evident in Malherbe's observation that the vocational education provided at the 'coloured' government industrial school in that period was more "by way of social salvage than meeting the needs of industry."⁶⁰⁷

The Botha Commission and 'coloured' education in the 1950s

One of the central goals of the Botha Commission of 1956/7 was to investigate the aim, function and effectiveness of the education provided at 'coloured' schools in that period, especially given the disquieting 'prevalence of retardation' among 'coloured' pupils (as evinced by age distribution tables and examination results).⁶⁰⁸

The Botha Commission noted that education "should strive after the higher development of the individual and should help to bring about an adaptation between the individual and the community, so that the former can become a fuller and more productive member of the community". The aim of education therefore was to "build up a happy, useful and productive 'coloured' community that should be able to realise itself to the fullest extent in the community at large".⁶⁰⁹

Yet the Botha Commission, at the outset of its deliberations, specifically emphasised that 'coloured' education was not envisaged as a specific type of education. Rather:

⁶⁰⁷ Malherbe (1977), p.190

⁶⁰⁸ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.4, 9

⁶⁰⁹ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.7

(T)he Commission is of the opinion that by ‘coloured’ education no more and no less must be understood than the education provided for those children whose parents belong to a certain population group, namely the ‘coloured’ people...while the Commission accepts the status quo regarding ‘coloured’ education, that is, an educational system under which European and Non-European children are strictly segregated in separate schools, (*the use of the word education is meant to refer*) to education in schools for ‘coloured’ children and not to a separate type of education.⁶¹⁰

The question then is: what factors and ideas informed the provision of education for ‘coloured’ children that made it different to that provided for other ‘racial’ groups at that time? It is clear that “the desire to change the unsatisfactory state of ‘coloured’ education” in this period was informed by two sets of ideas/developments. Firstly, it was informed by a changing perspective of the function and role of the school in the development of the child. By this time, the school had come to assume more and more of the educational obligations of the home as its responsibility. No longer was the school seen merely as an educational institution that provided for the intellectual and cultural development of its pupils. Rather, the school was increasingly regarded as the pivot on which the general education (intellectual, spiritual and physical) of the ‘whole’ child turned. This development contributed to the provision of education in the apartheid era being increasingly focused on the specific (and ‘different’) spiritual, intellectual and physical needs of children that were essentially based on the social, economic and political circumstances of each individual child.

Secondly, in this period, policy makers increasingly focused on environmental factors that were seen to ‘retard’ scholastic achievement. Thus, the Botha Commission was able to report that:

In the case of the ‘coloured’ community, the *home conditions* are often such that the children, to a greater extent than in other communities, lack the educational and elevating influences of a good home, *and the task resting on the shoulders of the school* (my emphasis) is the more important and exacting.⁶¹¹

The Botha Commission noted that between 1930 and 1954, the ‘coloured’ school population substantially increased from 60,561 children to 208,775 children.

⁶¹⁰ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.6

⁶¹¹ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.7

However, while this increase may have reflected a genuine desire to bring about substantial change to the state of ‘coloured’ education, the focus on the social and undesirable home conditions of the bulk of the ‘coloured’ population determined that a particular type of education was envisaged for ‘coloured’ children.

While the specific function of the school was to “teach (‘coloured’) pupils reading, writing and arithmetic so that they could at least be provided with the everyday requirements of civilised persons”, these pupils also were required to:

1. Acquire some knowledge about their bodies, their natural and social environment; and
2. Receive instruction in handwork that would contribute towards improving their manual skill in general.⁶¹²

Furthermore, the Botha Commission asserted in 1956 that “if it was borne in mind that a large part of the population of South Africa made a living by the use of its hands”, educational instruction for ‘coloured’ people certainly needed to emphasise the development of their manual skill. The Commission observed that:

Under present circumstances most of the opportunities for employment open to them (‘coloureds’) are in those fields of industry and agriculture where manual labour plays the chief role. This does not mean technical instruction for specific trades or occupations at this stage, the majority of pupils in the primary schools being too young for this.⁶¹³

According to the *Bureau of Census and Statistics* the main occupations of ‘coloured’ people in the Union and the percentage of employees in each group in 1946 were as follows:⁶¹⁴

Occupation	Percentage of Employees	
	Male	Female
1. Industry	36	17
2. Agriculture	36	6
3. Domestic Service	4	64
4. Transport and Communications	9	0
5. Trade and Commerce	2	1
6. The Professions	2	3
7. The mines	1	0

⁶¹² Botha Commission (1956/7), p.9

⁶¹³ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.9

⁶¹⁴ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.12

8. Other Occupations	3	2
9. Unclassified Occupations	7	7

Particularly worrying for the Commission was the number of ‘coloured’ pupils of 14 years and older in the primary standards that had not yet passed Standard V. It therefore suggested that where there existed a sufficient concentration of such pupils in ‘coloured’ schools, special courses in subjects such as woodwork, practical agriculture, needlework and housecraft needed to be followed. Using the experiences of the ‘white’ educational system with regard to juvenile delinquency, the Commission noted that this type of ‘special education’ for ‘mentally backward’ children would have a desirable effect in the case of ‘coloured’ children, especially with regard to the ‘skolly type’ in the cities.⁶¹⁵

A significant aspect of technical education policy in this period was the belief that all ‘coloured’ pupils, especially in the cities, who had passed Standard V or were 14 years-old required some training in skilled manual work. The Botha Commission asserted in 1956 that training “in the trades will be of more value than a course in the junior secondary school, even though the latter may be practical to the fullest extent allowed by the curriculum”. More specifically, the Commission noted in 1956 that:

It was most impressed by the vocational training received by pupils at institutions for committed children, and the sound vocational preparation that they are given. It is only to be regretted that a child has to be committed before he can share in these benefits. The type of education received by the pupils in these institutions would be of great value to (‘coloured’) pupils.⁶¹⁶

Conclusion

It has been asserted that the type and level of technical and industrial education that was provided for ‘coloured’ youths in ‘correctional’ institutions in the period after the Second World War, was defined by many external factors. These included the absence of compulsory education for ‘coloured’ children; their poverty-stricken circumstances; the low levels of education attained by many ‘coloured’ youths,

⁶¹⁵ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.10

⁶¹⁶ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.15

‘race’ determinants in terms of apprenticeship and job opportunities; and the limited availability of technical education institutions at that time. Trade training provision at the Ottery School of Industries was also informed by the ways in which the systems of technical and industrial education provision had been developed by that time for the ‘white’ population.

It will be argued in Section C that many practitioners involved in child care provision at that time recommended the transfer of ‘coloured’ boys to the Ottery School of Industries specifically for trade training. Notwithstanding a long history of technical training provision in schools of industries that emphasised ‘work preparedness’ and ‘military discipline’ and that did not prepare boys for skilled occupations, many practitioners believed that the trade training at Ottery would secure employment for the ‘coloured’ youths upon their release from state care. This was informed by the absence of alternative forms of technical education provision in the period 1948 to 1970. The emphasis on the trade training facilities at Ottery declined from the late 1970s when technical high schools were provided for ‘coloured children in Cape Town. Thereafter, the ‘correctional facility’ focused more on its disciplinary functions.

Section C

Ottery: The Social Institution



*Social Welfare Institutions
for 'in need of care'
'coloured' Boys in South
Africa in the period 1938
to 1970*

Introduction

A brief history of the nature of social welfare provision in South Africa in the period 1930-1970 is provided below to demonstrate the complex nature of the dilemmas confronting both indigent communities and welfare and child-care officials in South Africa at that time. This is followed by a short discussion of the links between education, work and social order in the 1940s, and how the emphasis on work training informed the implementation of child-care policy for 'coloured' boys in that period. The Section is then broken up into two parts. Part One focuses on the complex relationship between child-care policy, social institutions and 'coloured' boys in the period 1948-1970. Drawing on the life histories of nine informants who were institutionalised at various children's homes and at Ottery School of Industries during the relevant period, Part One argues that a mix of socio-economic, political and localised circumstances informed their 'committal' to child-care facilities. This is followed by a discussion of the reasons that were posited for the transfer of six of the informants from various children's homes to the 'correctional' institution, Ottery School of Industries, in Cape Town. Part Two focuses on the Ottery School of Industries for 'coloured' boys and argues that the social institution at Ottery, and the way it was constituted, played a crucial role in providing the parameters and shaping the lives of 'coloured' boys committed to the institution after 1948. Ottery was the place where child-care and welfare policy was implemented for the nine informants once they turned fourteen years old, and where the state sought to respond to the needs of 'coloured' indigent boys. It is further argued that the Ottery institution was also one of the sites from which the experience of providing 'correctional' welfare provision for 'coloured' boys helped to shape the process of developing welfare and educational policy during the National Party era.

1. Social Welfare and Society

Social welfare is an old policy notion that has a long history. In its early stages social aid was simply seen as charity, but gradually evolved into organised ways of providing a 'minimum level' in the standard of living of members of various

societies. Zald has noted that social welfare institutions “are the patterned collection of positions and organisations whose manifest purpose is to restore and/or maintain members of society at a minimum level of personal and social functioning”.⁶¹⁷ At the outset it is important then to make a distinction between informal or religious charity or welfare and ‘social welfare’ that later developed in the context of notions of the democratic states’ obligations towards the poor.

Historically, the philosophy of social welfare can be located in notions of Christian charity and the voluntary concern for people in need. This mode of welfare was characterised by the assumption that every person accepted the basic construction of society (and the inequalities within society). Welfare was ‘an act of giving’ by the rich who felt that they had a duty to the poor.⁶¹⁸ Here notions of service and notions of social contract were essentially derived by religious assumptions.⁶¹⁹

As the modernising state increasingly assumed responsibility for welfare provision, social welfare came to be defined as “a country’s system of programs, benefits and services which directly or indirectly responded to the human needs of its citizens”⁶²⁰. ‘Need’ was simply understood as the “physical, psychological, economic, cultural, and social requirements for survival, well-being and fulfilment.”⁶²¹ Because social welfare provision was usually accorded to individuals when traditional forms of family and other community supports failed them, the available social welfare services came to also assume the functions that the family structure had previously fulfilled.⁶²² These functions were related to the

⁶¹⁷ Zald, MN (1965) (ed), ‘Introduction’, *Social Welfare Institutions: A Sociological Reader*, (New York, John Wiley & Sons Inc, p.3)

⁶¹⁸ Bremner, R, ‘The Historical Background of Modern Welfare: Shifting Attitudes’, in Zald (1965), pp.21-29. For an analysis of philanthropic work amongst the rich (albeit in a much later period), see Ostrower, F (1995), *Why the Wealthy Give: The Culture of Elite Philanthropy*, (New Jersey, Princeton University Press)

⁶¹⁹ Kotze, FG (1995), *Social Welfare Policy for a Post-Apartheid South Africa: A Developmental Perspective*, (University of the Western Cape: Cape Town, unpublished doctoral mini-thesis, pp.61-64)

⁶²⁰ Macarov, C (1995), *Social Welfare: Structure and Practice*, (Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, p.18)

⁶²¹ Macarov (1995), p.18

⁶²² In this regard, the role of industrialisation in disrupting the functions previously performed by the family must be emphasised. It can be argued that the emergence of rapid industrialisation in

socialisation, control and protection of the individual members of families in various societies. The ways in which these responsibilities were pursued by individual systems of welfare then depended on the complex mix of religious injunction, political strategy, economic consideration and ideological justification in individual countries.⁶²³ Zald notes that:

Societies differ in the way in which they are organised to handle welfare problems, in the resources committed to handling different kinds of problems, and in the values attached to different types of programs and allocations.⁶²⁴

While the history of social welfare in most Western countries is often presented as the history of the Poor Laws and private charities of individual countries, it is apparent that the motivations for engaging in social welfare provision such as “mutual aid, religious commitment, the desire for political advantage, economic considerations and other ideological factors”⁶²⁵ were considerably different for individual industrialised countries. The development of social welfare systems particular to individual industrialised countries was then essentially determined by the complex ways in which charitable philanthropic welfare organisations, the various churches, and (in some countries) public welfare systems, addressed contextual socio-economic and political conditions. Also, given the differing levels of co-ordination between those involved in providing welfare services in the various countries, the responses to social developments like industrialisation and urbanisation were significantly different for individual industrialised societies.

a) The Historical Development of Social Welfare in South Africa

The development of social welfare provision in South Africa can be characterised as a “complex tangle of events”⁶²⁶ informed at various times and in different ways by

individual countries caused the introduction of modern systems of welfare provision. See Kotze (1995), p.63

⁶²³ For a discussion of “the values and principles” that informed welfare provision in the United Kingdom over the past century and the role of the state in providing welfare, see Deakin, N (1994), *The Politics of Welfare: Continuities and Change*, (London, Harvester Wheatsheaf)

⁶²⁴ Zald (1965), p.1

⁶²⁵ Macarov (1995), ‘Introduction’, p.xv

⁶²⁶ Kotze (1995), p.63

ideas linked to ‘race issues’, ‘social and moral improvement’, ‘reform’ and poverty-alleviation. Historically, social welfare provision developed through various stages, starting with paternalistic relief and curative social policies in the late nineteenth century, followed by a social democratic phase from the late 1930s that was characterised by social security benefits and greater social relief for urban poor communities. In South Africa the emergence of formal welfare provision was notably informed by attempts to intervene in ways that altered the socio-economic status of the welfare recipients. This was particularly evident at times of rapid industrialisation and urbanisation. The discovery of gold and diamonds in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 and the subsequent economic depression, rapid migration to the cities at times of war, famine and depression, and the secondary industry boom of the 1940s are just a few examples of transformative ‘moments’ in the history of welfare aid in South Africa. It is significant that the ‘interventions’ that did materialise also had clear political and ideological objectives. Morrell, for example, notes that the responses to the issues of ‘poor whiteism’ from the 1890s were a significant political aspect of the development of Afrikaner Nationalism.⁶²⁷

The emergence of welfare provision in South Africa (both inside and outside state structures) can be traced historically to the influence of religion and the political drive for the upliftment of ‘poor whites’ at various times. On the one hand it is argued that “the concern with ‘white’ welfare” crucially informed the inception and formalisation of social welfare in South Africa on a scale comparable to many Western countries. This concern increased after the report of the *First Carnegie Inquiry into the Poor White Problem* was published. Kotze argues that the church’s and state’s “pre-occupation with the needs of ‘whites’ (especially Afrikaners) in this period largely informed the way in which welfare services evolved in South Africa, as well as its subsequent structures.”⁶²⁸ It is fair to say then that the formulation of

⁶²⁷ Morrell, R (ed) (1991), *White but Poor: Essays on the History of Poor Whites in Southern Africa, 1880-1940*, (Pretoria)

⁶²⁸ Kotze (1995), p.103

social welfare policies in South Africa was directly linked to the dominant beliefs and social values of ‘whites’, and their political and social needs at particular historical moments.

It can also be argued that the provision of social welfare for ‘poor whites’ from the 1890s was a crucial part of the Afrikaner Nationalist political project. The ethos of the efforts by both the Union Government and voluntary organisations (which included the churches) to address the political, social and economic needs of ‘whites’ can for example be clearly seen in the formation of the Transvaal Indigency Commission⁶²⁹ of 1906-8 and later in 1935 in the establishment of a special social welfare division (serving the needs of ‘poor whites’) within the Department of Labour. At the time state officials argued that the social, political and economic needs of indigent ‘whites’ would best be resolved by directly addressing their employment needs at a national level.⁶³⁰

On the other hand, it is notable that the provision of welfare in South Africa (as in many other countries) was very much a religious exercise. It was tied up in complex ways with the idea that the relief of distress was good not only for the recipient, but also for the giver and the overall community. Religion supposedly imbued welfare provision with a sense of dignity in relation to issues of poverty and contributed in significant ways to the social acceptance of the poor. This informed the vigour and enthusiasm of many practitioners working in the area of welfare provision. In this regard, in the Protestant Christian political environment of South Africa in the first

⁶²⁹ Chisholm has noted that the Transvaal Indigency Commission was formed in 1906 to explore measures for reclaiming the children of the rural and urban unskilled and unemployed and in so doing resolving poverty amongst Europeans. The Transvaal Indigency Commission asserted in 1908 that “getting hold of the children of the (‘white’) unemployed through compulsory schooling” was crucial to resolving ‘white’ unemployment and poverty. In this regard, the Commission argued that by teaching the children a trade which would secure them employment, the children would also learn the habits of industry and social discipline which were not being provided in their homes. See Chisholm (1989), pp.60-74. Also see Transvaal Indigency Commission Report of 1906-1908, (Pretoria, pp. 100, 240 and 55)

⁶³⁰ The belief that employment would serve as a form of ‘moral salvation’ from the depths of depravity served as a powerful metaphor for the projection of the notion that labour was a ‘noble’ activity. See Kotze (1995), p.112

half of the twentieth century, welfare was regarded as a necessary part of the salvation of the better off. The representation of welfare as a 'noble exercise' and as a meritorious deed of alms giving also provided the provision thereof with a concept of eligibility: the orphan, widow and the stranger deserved every assistance, but not the lazy, the hypocritical and the immoral. This later also informed terms like 'deserving whites' and 'deserving blacks'.

To give welfare provision to those who did not deserve it would simply deprive those who did.⁶³¹

There is an interesting dualism to such an argument. Just as religion provided philanthropic work with a particular kind of legitimacy, religion also encouraged the viewpoint that poverty and need were not only inevitable but in a certain sense desirable. Simply put, if God didn't want poverty to exist then people would not have been allowed to become poor and dependent. Such a viewpoint 'naturalised' the gap between rich and poor. In the context of a modernising South African society in the 1930s and 1940s this religious assumption⁶³² was used to differentiate between 'white' and 'non-white' as much as it distinguished between 'white' and 'poor white'⁶³³. The link between religion and economic matters was perhaps most clearly articulated by General Smuts in 1936 at the *National Conference on Social Work* in Johannesburg when he noted that:

I think there is far too much star gazing in connection with religion. Religion also has its economic side, and I am proud to note the way in which our churches are having regard also to the economic and material questions that concern the community in almost equal degree.⁶³⁴

⁶³¹ Macarov (1995), pp.91-92

⁶³² One of the major reasons why people and society in general engage in social welfare has been, and will continue to be, the 'desire to do God's will'. This motivation is experienced differently in various social contexts. See Macarov (1995), pp.92-103

⁶³³ Chisholm, for example, argues that the work of the Children's Aid Society in Johannesburg was most certainly structured by theories of urban degeneration and Social Darwinism, but relied ultimately on theological and moral premises. While missionary-type work was conceived of differently in the various social arenas, in most cases it was crucially informed by the desire to 'improve' (whatever that meant) the lives of the various subjects. See Chisholm (1989), p.114

⁶³⁴ Union of South Africa (1937), *Report of the National Conference on Social Work in Johannesburg, September to October 1936*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.11)

Significantly, from 1935 far more 'parties' became involved in social welfare issues than had been the case before. These parties were not necessarily affiliated to church or state, nor was their work confined to the 'white' population. This involvement from the mid-1930s of a variety of groups dealing with the social needs of all South Africans crucially informed the subsequent formation of a Department of Social Welfare that served all South Africans. As was noted before, a Welfare Department had been attached to the Department of Labour in 1935 to service the 'needs' of impoverished 'whites'. From 1937 the Department of Social Welfare existed as an independent Union Government department.

Hellman, writing about the state of welfare in South Africa in the period 1935 to 1949, has noted that the townward migration of large numbers of the agrarian 'white' population after 1920 had put tremendous pressure on the services of the municipalities of the various cities. Services became particularly strained when this was followed by similar migrations of 'coloured', 'indian' and 'african' communities in the 1930s. Hellman argues that the rapid urbanisation of the 1930s pressured municipalities and urban communities to address the provision of social welfare aid for 'non-white' communities in the cities.

The formation in the towns from 1922 onwards of Joint Councils, voluntary bodies consisting of Europeans and of members of the racial group concerned, and the establishment of the Institute of Race Relations in 1929, were largely instrumental in drawing public attention to the social and economic conditions under which Non-Europeans live, and bringing about their inclusion in increasing measure within State and voluntary social welfare agencies.⁶³⁵

This situation was best summarised by the Report of the Secretary of Social Welfare in 1943, which was indicative of the changing political project of the United Party at the time.

Of paramount importance to the Department of Social Welfare at the present time is the awareness of the vigorous and growing public interest in contemporary social and economic questions. It is marked by a public recognition of the intensification of stresses in a population of heterogeneous

⁶³⁵ Hellman (1949), p.414

elements; the growth of complex urban communities with its corresponding disintegration of rural life; an expanding industrial economy and the social consequences of war; which must all be matched by new policies and techniques in social service. A product of this evolution in public thought has been the further recognition that social welfare is a definite and important function of national government.⁶³⁶

This does not necessarily mean that the social welfare needs of ‘non-white’ communities were actually addressed in the period after 1937. Rather, the recognition of the deleterious conditions under which ‘non-white’ communities lived in urban centres from the 1930s and the potential for ‘social chaos’ with which ‘white’ voters were thus threatened, led to the gradual inclusion of ‘non-whites’ within the ambit of social welfare policy (in relation to their material as well as their ‘spiritual’ needs)⁶³⁷. The emphasis on the supposed pernicious social circumstances

⁶³⁶ Union of South Africa (1943), *Report of the Union Department of Social Welfare for 1942*, (Pretoria, Government Printer)

⁶³⁷ In the period between 1937 and 1945 the needs of ‘non-whites’ were being increasingly recognised by most sectors of South African society. This was directly associated with the surge in economic growth and the resultant urbanisation in that period, as well as with the breakdown of many of the ‘fictions’ that underlay the development of a system of segregation, i.e. that blacks were in urban areas ONLY to minister to the needs of the ‘white’ population and that blacks had access to land and economic independence in the ‘Native Reserves’. O’Meara has noted that the Second World War literally transformed South Africa’s sluggish economy and finally dragged it out of the lingering effects of the Great Depression era. In this period the Union Government poured millions into promoting industries. South Africa’s GNP grew by almost 70 % in just six years between 1939-1945 and South Africa was listed among the world’s 10 richest countries at the end of the war (by the IMF). In the context of the war effort and the absence of many ‘white’ workers on military service the Smuts Government authorised job ‘dilution’ during this period, which allowed a significant number of ‘non-white’ unqualified workers to do skilled work under ‘white’ supervision in a wide range of industries. State economic and social planning (and administration bodies) also increasingly encouraged a process of ‘rationalisation’ that incorporated these kinds of workers, and addressed the needs of these urban immigrants. Furthermore, the great number of ‘africans’ that were migrating to the cities in this period as a result of the economic collapse of the ‘reserves’, could simply not be controlled or regulated. O’Meara notes that in 1937 only 11 municipalities in South Africa were actually implementing the Urban Areas Act. Municipal authorities were apparently “more susceptible to the blandishments of local businesses in need of labour than to the strictures of the Department of Native Affairs.” See O’ Meara, D (1996), *Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party, 1948-1994*, (Randburg, Ravan Press, pp.20-26). At the same time, extending welfare services to the ‘non-white’ poor was also regarded as a religious responsibility by both state and church groups. Jan Smuts, in his opening address to the *National Conference on Social Work in 1936* noted that:

“We shall fail, and fail very profoundly, unless in this matter of social service we give every care and attention to the cause, the pitiable cause, of the native, the coloured person and the Indian in South Africa. Like the learned men in the Bible, we pass by and look the other way, and that has been our habitual attitude except in regard to the missionary. The time has come when we as a European community should realise our duty and discharge it faithfully.”

of urban ‘non-whites’ also came to define the type of support provided for ‘non-whites’. It is significant that the welfare support provided for ‘non-white’ communities from the 1940s overwhelmingly focused on the ‘anti-social’ elements in communities deemed to be ‘dysfunctional’. It is argued that this emphasis was derived in that period from a complex mix of ideas which included the impact of ‘scientific intervention’, issues related to what was deemed to be racial ‘inferiority’, and a particular religious interpretation of ‘spiritual degeneration’. This was most notably visible in the professed functions of the Department of Social Welfare. The sub-committee of the Cabinet noted in 1938 that the Social Welfare Department was required to:

- a) Rehabilitate the socially maladjusted or poorly adjusted individual or family
- b) Study and treat the conditions which may produce or contribute to social maladjustment;
- c) To co-ordinate the social rehabilitative work of the different state departments.⁶³⁸

The emphasis on the ‘socially maladjusted’ had been defined by previous reports that had emerged from the pioneering researches of Professor WM Macmillan in the period 1915 to 1919 and the comprehensive studies of the ‘Poor White Commission’ (Carnegie Report) in the period 1928 to 1932, which had highlighted the need to address the problems associated with poverty in scientific ways⁶³⁹. This was further

See Report of the National Conference on Social Work (1937), p.13

⁶³⁸ Union of South Africa (1937), *Annual Report of the Department of Social Welfare for 1937*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.4). Cited in Kotze (1995), p.104

⁶³⁹ From 1924 clear links were formulated between education, the labour market and unemployment. The development of these links between education, unemployment and the labour market was associated with the development of aptitude tests by professors RW Wilcocks, ML Fick and J Coetzee in this period, which served as a precursor to the development of psychological services in ‘white’ schools in South Africa from the 1940s and the emergence of the medical model that came to dominate the way in which the needs of the poor were addressed in South Africa thereafter. This model, which focused on ideas associated with the individual deficit theory, viewed the poor person as a helpless and dependent being and suggested that such a person receive aid outside ‘regular provisions’ when unable to work and serve society. This viewpoint paved the way for the differential implementation of a host of state intervention programmes that dealt with the needs of the poor. See Krige, S (1994), ‘Segregation, Science and Commissions of Enquiry: Education and the place of the “Natives” in Society, 1930-1936, *Journal of Southern African Studies: Twentieth Anniversary Conference: Paradigms Lost, Paradigms Regained?*, September 1994.

emphasised in a variety of government commissions and reports⁶⁴⁰ in the period 1937 to 1945. These reports suggested that the special needs of the various indigent communities be individually ‘treated’ within the confines of their respective home environments and according to the particular contextual circumstances of the individual communities. The definition of ‘needs’ was linked here to a variety of contested issues that included questions of labour reservation and increased social segregation in urban areas, the protection of ‘white superiority’, religious notions of ‘civilising the natives’, and the particular ‘type’ of provision that was best suited to the varying needs of individual race-defined communities. In South Africa in the 1930s and 1940s this meant not only the separate provision of welfare aid to the various racially defined communities, but also the provision of different types of aid. This can best be seen in the historical ‘unfolding’ of welfare provision in South Africa.

The development of social welfare provision in South Africa was characterised by three core stages.⁶⁴¹ They are:

- i) The period before the 1930s;
- ii) The period between 1930 and 1950;
- iii) The period between 1951 and 1980.

i) Before 1930 (the pre-professional era)

The provision of welfare aid in the period before 1930 in South Africa can best be described as the era of religion and voluntarism. During this stage, the various

⁶⁴⁰ Refer here for example to the Union of South Africa (1937), *Report of the Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Cape Coloured Population in the Union G68EUG*, (Pretoria, Government Printer); Union of South Africa (1937), *Native Affairs Commission of 1936*, (Pretoria, Government Printer); Batson, E (1943), *Social Survey of Cape Town*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town), Union of South Africa (1943), *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Social, Health and Economic Conditions of Urban Natives (the Smit Report)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer).

⁶⁴¹ There is considerable variation in the periodisation paradigms adopted by the various authors who have recorded the history of social welfare in South Africa. The periodisation adopted by Kotze in his 1995 doctoral thesis is preferred here. See Kotze (1995), pp.104-5. Also see Brummer, F (1965), ‘Die verhouding tussen die staat en die partikuliere inisiatief in die professionele maatskaplike werk in Suid-Afrika’, in Cronje, G (ed), *Professionele Maatskaplike Werk*, (Pretoria, Van Schaik Ltd, pp.35-52)

churches provided the bulk of welfare aid to the impoverished. In this period there was significant growth in the number of non-government agencies involved in the provision of welfare. The services provided by these agencies (roughly identifiable as family and child-care voluntary agencies) were however very limited.

In this period the church was the predominant influence in welfare aid provision for two reasons. Firstly, before 1930 the basic principle on which social welfare operated in South Africa was mutual aid and charity; motivations that were principally associated with the church. Secondly, the fragmented nature of state control associated with the colonial and provincial structure of South Africa during that period made it difficult for 'local practitioners' who sought to provide social welfare assistance to formulate a regulated response to the social needs of the impoverished in South Africa. McKendrick argues that the South African state simply did not see its role in these ways at the time. In the period before 1930 the Union Government was quite content to play a largely enabling legislative role in welfare provision (as was the case in Europe in the nineteenth century) and allow the churches to provide poor relief. The onus for the humane well being of individuals was deemed to lie with the individual, relevant family members and communities. In this regard, the subsequent development of a 'residual' welfare system, where welfare was only provided when the normal structures of supply (the individual, the family, the community and the economic system) broke down, continued to emphasise the envisaged role of the individual⁶⁴² and his or her relationship with the church. Even when state aid was provided, it was considered a privilege that was only granted under very particular circumstances and could be withheld under others (for example, when recipients were not deemed 'worthy').

Within this particular reading of 'welfare'⁶⁴³, the most prominent welfare body in South Africa was the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). During this period the DRC

⁶⁴² McKendrick, BW (ed) (1987), *Introduction to Social Work in South Africa*, (Pinetown, Owen Burgess Publishers, p.22)

⁶⁴³ The work of the missionary agencies that were working among the indigenous peoples at that time is regarded here as a different notion of 'welfare' (linked to for example issues like 'civilising').

performed a crucial role in providing social relief to 'white' Afrikaners. The DRC played a significant role in investigating the social circumstances surrounding 'poor white' need during this period and urged their agendas on the Union Government as part of the political project of Afrikaner Nationalism. In his presidential address to the *National Conference of Social Work* in 1936, General JC Smuts observed that:

The South African War of 1899-1902, which brought poverty and destruction in its train, was a tremendous calamity that created a social need quite beyond anything previously encountered. It gave a tremendous impetus to the work of the churches, especially the Dutch Reformed Church, which rightly took the lead for it was among the members of this church that the need was greatest. The Dutch Reformed Church has done magnificent work and has shown not only a great spirit of responsibility towards the people's soul, but also toward their social needs.⁶⁴⁴

In this period the Dutch Reformed Church was also actively involved in securing foster care for neglected and orphaned 'white' (mostly Afrikaner) children. Where foster care could not be found, the church set about establishing orphanages. Furthermore, the Dutch Reformed Church was instrumental in establishing the first industrial schools for 'whites' in South Africa that sought to provide 'poor white' Afrikaner children access to the 'appropriate life skills' deemed necessary for their survival⁶⁴⁵. In rural areas the church also collaborated with state authorities in formulating a system of school hostels that provided 'white' Afrikaner rural children in remote areas with living accommodation in nearby towns so that they could attend school. The emergence of rural settlements in the period before 1930 was likewise regarded by the DRC as real-life intervention in the lives of poor 'whites' to help them deal with their social problems. This was especially evident in the large number of old age homes and institutions for unmarried mothers that were established under the patronage of the DRC in this period.

The church movement was also primarily responsible for the establishment of institutions of special education for the blind, the deaf and the epileptic in the period before 1930. In this regard, it was the Roman Catholic Church that pioneered the

⁶⁴⁴ Report of the National Conference on Social Work (1937), p.11

provision of these services. This church, along with the Church of the Province (the Anglican Church) and the Methodist Church of South Africa, were the most prominent groups that made significant contributions to the establishment of children's homes and schools for 'non-white' children before 1930.

From the 1930s social welfare activities in South Africa began to increasingly mirror social welfare developments in Europe and America, where greater state involvement in the initiation and control of social welfare services and institutions emerged alongside the development of various kinds of voluntary social welfare agencies.⁶⁴⁶ This development emerged alongside the growing poverty and dislocation that came to be associated with the Great Depression period, the Keynesian economics that characterised that period, and the consequent rapid migration of large numbers of people from rural communities to urban centres. These developments⁶⁴⁷ contributed in significant ways to the 'active' involvement of localised urban municipalities in debates about the provision of welfare relief for the urban poor in South Africa from 1937.

In this regard the major impetus of state-initiated social welfare measures in South Africa was on the welfare of the 'white' population and the 'security' of the urban populations. It was part of the political strategy of that period to provide for 'poor

⁶⁴⁵ In an earlier time Lovedale etc (for 'africans') were also called industrial schools.

⁶⁴⁶ Peter Kallaway argues that in the USA during the period 1932 to 1938 state welfare involvement played a major role in the Keynesian economic recovery during the New Deal era. The pronounced link between welfare policies and economic recovery was also evident in the United Kingdom in this period. Furthermore, Kallaway argues that the late 1930s - early 1940s were characterised by a political trend in the industrialised nations of the West that emphasised the required provision of welfare programmes to deflect the political threats to the state that emerged in the new social context of increased urbanisation and rapid industrialisation. See Kallaway, P (1994), "Policy Challenges for Education in the 'New' South Africa: The Case for School-Feeding in the context of Social and Economic Reconstruction", *Transformation*, 31, 1996, pp.1-24. O' Meara notes that the massive influx of 'africans' into the cities during the Second World War created many urban conflicts in which a militant and independent trade union movement mushroomed. It also had a profound impact on formal black political opposition in that period. The emergence of these groups placed particular kinds of pressure on the state in the 1940s. See O' Meara (1996), pp.25-27

⁶⁴⁷ With the coalition of the National Party and the South African Party to form the United Party in 1933 the way was cleared for an economic revival based on the gold-mining industry. Spurred on by significant state support, secondary industrialisation subsequently 'took off' in the late 1930s and

whites'. The formalisation of welfare relief in South Africa on a scale comparable to other Western countries occurred at a time when the *First Carnegie Inquiry into the Poor White Problem* had identified the economic and social impoverishment of 'poor whites' in South Africa as the most important social issue of that period.⁶⁴⁸

Until then the state had made some effort to provide provisional schemes of relief for 'poor whites'. State interest in 'white indigency' was certainly visible from 1910. However, after the Pact government of General Hertzog came into power in 1924, greater emphasis was placed on the devising of state programmes to create work opportunities for indigent 'whites'. In this regard a state Department of Labour was created in 1924 and part of its brief was to find work for destitute 'whites'. After 1924 employment openings were provided in the armed forces, railways, municipalities and agricultural settlements as part of a plan to develop a stable, working 'white' community that could easily withstand labour competition from 'non-white' groups in South Africa. Despite these remedial measures poverty and destitution amongst the 'white' population nonetheless continued to increase.⁶⁴⁹

The level of 'white destitution' grew significantly in the period of depression in the late 1920s and led to widespread public interest. In 1928 the Dutch Reformed Church instigated an investigation funded by the *Carnegie Corporation of New York* into the causes for 'white' poverty in South Africa, its extent, and the means by which it could be reduced. Emphasising its use of 'scientific' approaches, the *Carnegie Commission of Inquiry* reported in 1932 that there were 300 000 'poor whites' in South Africa and suggested that the main cause for indigency amongst the 'white' population was not linked to their personal inadequacies, but rather lay in

early 1940s and provided the material context for the administrative transformation of the welfare and education sectors after the Second World War. See Chisholm (1989), pp.295-298

⁶⁴⁸ See Union of South Africa (1950), *Report of the Departmental Committee of Inquiry into the Training and Employment of Social Workers*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.1) which asserted that "the desire and the urge to solve the problem of poverty and consequent retardation amongst a large section of the European population at the time transcended in importance and gravity all other social questions".

⁶⁴⁹ McKendrick (1987), p.11

the nature of the social and economic structure of the country⁶⁵⁰. The Commission subsequently recommended the establishment of a state department that would be directly responsible for the social welfare needs of the indigent 'white' population of South Africa, as well as the development of a professional (university-trained) social worker corps well-versed in the scientific language of the social sciences.⁶⁵¹

With regard to the latter recommendation, the period leading up to 1930 had also been characterised by the formation of national councils in the fields of child welfare and the welfare of the handicapped. The banding together of local welfare organisations in national councils and the formation of the National Council for Child Welfare in 1924 and the National Councils for the Blind and for the Deaf in 1929 had not only demonstrated the need for greater co-ordination of provincial bodies but also signalled the great dearth of professionally-trained practitioners in the various fields. The separate development of these sectors on a national basis in this period also indicated the possible 'racially differentiated' ways in which welfare aid could be provided after 1930.⁶⁵² It is certainly significant that while the policies of the various national councils did not overtly distinguish between members of different racial groups, the welfare services were provided primarily for the 'white' population of South Africa. It is argued that by 1930 there existed particular social and racial structural patterns in South African society that laid the basis for the separate provision of welfare aid based on race thereafter.

⁶⁵⁰ There were divergent approaches to this. On the one hand, Jan Smuts noted in 1936 that poverty among 'poor whites' merely indicated their material impoverishment. He claimed that there "is a high percentage of people called poor whites who are by no means poor in spirit or quality. If you applied ordinary educational tests a very high percentage of so-called poor whites would show more than just average ability. The human stuff among people referred to as poor whites is good and is there, and when it gets the opportunity it shows its worth at once". See Report of National Conference on Social Work (1937), pp.9-10. On the other hand, EG Malherbe was less sure than Smuts on these issues. Malherbe argued that the main cause of 'poor whiteism' was 'maladjustment' and that the essential task of education and social work amongst 'poor white' children was to 'scientifically' readjust them in particular environments. Smuts claimed that social and financial aid would 'cure' 'poor whiteism', while Malherbe argued that 'white' maladjusted children could be assimilated and reformed using scientific interventions. See Malherbe, EG (1932), *The Poor White Problem in South Africa*, (Stellenbosch) as cited in Chisholm (1989), p.314

⁶⁵¹ See McKendrick (1987), pp.11-12

ii) The Period 1930 to 1950 (the transitional era)

The period 1930 to 1950 may be broken up into two parts. The first period 1930 to 1937 may be seen as a continuation of the philanthropic era of voluntarism and religion, but was linked more to a growing demand for state participation in the provision of social welfare aid for the ‘white’ population. Until 1930 the state’s contribution to social welfare had consisted mainly of the promulgation of legislation on child welfare and institutional care. The Provincial Governments, charitable organisations and the churches provided the poor with ‘social relief’. Kotze argues that the 1930s were characterised by the emergence of massive state and community involvement in social welfare provision in South Africa, and was perhaps the most crucial period in the development of a system of social welfare provision in South Africa⁶⁵³. While the ‘novel’ approach to the person ‘in need’ (using scientific knowledge)⁶⁵⁴ adopted by the *Report of the Carnegie Commission Inquiry into the Poor White Problem* may have had a crucial influence on this ‘new era’ in social welfare provision, developments at that time were also significantly informed by the Keynesian economics of the post-Depression era. Kotze argues that it then required the added pressure from two further conferences in the 1930s to effect significant government involvement and action.⁶⁵⁵ Both the ‘*Volkskongres*’ of 1934 and the *National Conference on Social Work* in 1936 emphasised the need for a combined effort (on the part of the various churches and the state) in eradicating ‘white’ poverty. In this regard, Dr HF Verwoerd, as the Head of the School of Social Work at Stellenbosch University, noted in a (translated) letter to Prime Minister Hertzog in 1935 that:

The state should establish a department that could provide the country with policy and guidance in connection with social welfare problems and by means of which the government could administer all the welfare activities at

⁶⁵² McKendrick (1987), p.12

⁶⁵³ Kotze (1995), p.114; A crucial development in the 1930s that is not addressed here is the involvement of several other churches that were hitherto not extensively involved in social welfare services. From the 1930s the Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic Church increasingly started their own welfare programmes. These programmes were significantly different to those of the dominant Dutch Reformed Church.

⁶⁵⁴ See Section B, Chapter 3, “Psychologising the industrial child”

⁶⁵⁵ Kotze (1995), p.115

present distributed among several departments. Then at least there would clearly be one organ responsible for the State's share of welfare work, and the philanthropic societies doing such commendable work in the various communities would be aware of a single responsible authority with whom they should co-operate.⁶⁵⁶

At the time, the purpose of the 'Volkskongres' in Kimberley in 1934 was to propose a national strategy to eradicate poverty amongst 'whites'. Members present at the Conference agreed that a partnership between state and church was essential in addressing the social needs of the 'white' population, and that the envisaged guidelines that would subsequently come to define national social welfare policy should include religious and scientific 'solutions'. The Congress can also be seen as a propaganda exercise to unite Afrikaners divided after the formation of a Fusion-Government and the establishment of the Purified National Party. Reverend JR Albertyn, representing the DRC, summarised this viewpoint when he noted that:

What may well be expected of this conference is that all the great social institutions of the country: the State, education, the Churches, other philanthropic bodies, indeed that of all citizens, each in his own sphere of work, but acting in co-ordination with the rest, will in future present a united front to the common enemies of pauperism, misery and degradation.⁶⁵⁷

Provided below is a broad outline of the main policy strategies that were agreed at the Conference. The central concerns were with the various ways of improving the lives of 'poor whites' in 'challenging' social contexts and how to link proposed state 'interventions' to the ideals of the church. It was argued:

- a) That reorganising welfare work would significantly combat the effects of poverty;
- b) That improving housing conditions in cities, towns and villages was fundamental to improving the social conditions of 'poor whites';
- c) That child welfare work needed to also deal with problems associated with issues of juvenile delinquency;
- d) That it was crucial to provide opportunities for 'white' male employment in the urban environment;

⁶⁵⁶ Helm, B (1962), *Social Work in a South African City*, (Cape Town: UCT, Board of Sociological Research, p.69)

⁶⁵⁷ Union of South Africa (1934), *National Conference on the Poor White Problem in Kimberley in 1934*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.5)

- e) That there was a need for the temporary care of the 'white' unemployed by means of unemployment and health insurance at times of stress;
- f) That firm attempts were needed to increase employment in rural areas by providing access to the mechanisation of agriculture;
- g) That special provision of employment of 'poor whites' in rural areas was required;
- h) That the establishment of church settlements and labour for adult males was required;
- i) That there was a great need to emphasise the place of the Church as a social institution in national life;
- j) That this would highlight the Christian ideal of social work;
- k) That this would stress the social implications of the Christian Gospel and its links to the school and employment;
- l) That the key concern was to constantly remind that the 'poor white' problem (besides the economic) was also a psychological and educational problem and that it could be solved by state and church intervention. (Quoted verbatim)⁶⁵⁸

The role of the churches in pressurising the Union Government to get more involved in providing welfare provision was crucial here. This pressure subsequently informed the 'collective approach' that was adopted between the state and the private agencies of philanthropy. In this partnership the state from 1937 (via the Department of Social Welfare) became increasingly responsible for a variety of services that the churches were financially incapable of providing. Some of these services were linked to probation work which was claimed to require a national focus, the supervision of child protection services, the control of adoptions nationally, the provision of particular rehabilitative services and social security measures, the subsidisation of various services administered by voluntary bodies, and with co-ordinating charitable effort on the part of both state and private initiative (including municipalities).⁶⁵⁹

The call for greater co-ordination between state and voluntary and church agencies was based on the belief that welfare relief was not an end in itself, and that greater attention needed to be given to rehabilitative 'interventions'. At the *National*

⁶⁵⁸ National Conference on Poor White Problem (1934), pp.5-7; Also see Kotze (1995), pp.116-117

⁶⁵⁹ Kotze (1995), p.119

Conference for Social Work in 1936, Dr. F. Brummer, later Secretary for Social Welfare, argued that:

The inroads made by the central government may be justified by the widening view that is being taken of what should constitute poor relief and by the increasing understanding of its national aspects. It is now recognised that no constructive result can accrue from the distribution of a minimum of clothing and food to absolutely destitute persons merely sufficient to save them from starvation. If at the same time no constructive effort at rehabilitation is attempted, it may create a vicious continuation of the condition of poverty that it seeks to remedy.⁶⁶⁰

Perhaps more importantly, from 1930 the need for greater co-ordination of social welfare assistance was also coupled with the idea that state-intervention in the provision of welfare aid did not only entail material assistance. It was deemed to also be about the setting up of commissions to ‘scientifically’ analyse the main issues in the field of welfare provision. It was increasingly asserted that it was the responsibility of the state to initiate studies of social conditions at a national level through inspections and surveys, and then to offer appropriate ‘solutions’ to national social problems. This type of interaction between the Union Government and the churches thereafter informed debates on social relief issues in South Africa. For example, in their interactions with state officials and academics at the various national conferences during the 1930s, church officials increasingly admitted that their reliance on institutions was not ‘resolving’ the social issues of ‘poor whites’.⁶⁶¹ In discussions with Union Government officials it was generally agreed that institutionalisation was not necessarily ‘the best way’ of re-building the ‘white’ working class family. This position was informed by debates that were taking place internationally at that time. Chisholm argues in this regard that by 1934 only 24% of ‘white’ juveniles appearing before children’s courts were being institutionalised,

⁶⁶⁰ Report of National Conference on Social Work (1937), p.21

⁶⁶¹ Kotze argues that churches began to adopt different ‘methods’ in this period. The churches started focusing on developing new associations with “the object of the social rehabilitation of social welfare recipients and the treatment of the causal conditions from which poverty and degeneration sprung”. See Kotze (1995), p.109

while the remainder were placed in some form of community care. Community care thereafter was the preferred option for 'white' children in need of welfare aid.⁶⁶²

This raises two crucial issues with regard to social welfare provision. Firstly, although it was generally acknowledged at the various conferences that concentrating on 'white' poverty was 'morally wrong',⁶⁶³ it was overwhelmingly argued by various respondents at the conferences that 'white' poverty needed to be solved first before the social problems of 'non-whites' could be addressed. It was also asserted that for 'civilising' work amongst 'non-whites' in South Africa to be successful, the 'poor white' question needed to be resolved first. The resolution of 'white' poverty was thus regarded as a social, political and religious priority by both the state and the churches in this period. WM Nicol argued at the *National Conference on the Poor White Problem* in 1934 that:

We would like to feel that we do not only serve our own nation. Christian teachings are by themselves unselfish and attempts to extend aid outside particular family groupings and nation groups. In the South African context this is even more the case. Our major calling as a nation is after all towards the indigenous peoples. But presently we are forced to restrict our efforts to the needs of our own people. It is virtually impossible to offer a helping hand if our own situation is deteriorating. Our entire approach as a church is influenced by the fact that so many of our people are poor whites. It should be clear to everyone that unless we focus and solve the poor white problem, there is very little we can do to solve the native problem. (translated)⁶⁶⁴

Secondly, the linkage of local social welfare concerns to national issues led to different approaches being taken in relation to the needs of various racial groups. It is significant that a number of commissions were appointed by the Union Government during the 1930s to investigate the social needs of the various groups in South Africa. These commissions were committed to 'scientific' approaches in their research methodologies, they attempted to consult as broadly as possible, and were mostly focused on the needs of urban areas. The Native Affairs Commission of 1936, the 1937 Wilcocks Commission Report on the Coloured Population, and the

⁶⁶² Chisholm (1989), pp.144-147

⁶⁶³ Report of the National Conference on Social Work (1936), p.13

Social Survey Commissions conducted by the University of Cape Town in the period 1936 to 1942 mostly focused on the social problems of urban communities and recommended that urgent steps be taken also in relation to the social welfare needs of 'non-whites' in urban areas. What was particularly striking about the various commissions was the way in which the social needs of 'poor whites' were understood in terms of the consolidation of the stable 'white' working class family and community in that period, while the social needs of 'non-whites' were addressed in terms of 'labour issues' and linked to issues of social control.⁶⁶⁵ This differentiated approach had a significant impact on welfare provision in the 1940s and 1950s.

The second period of the transitional era between 1938 and 1950 was characterised by the public outcry for social welfare aid which was firmly linked to the publication of the Atlantic Charter which emphasised "the four freedoms", including the freedom from want and the development of social security programmes in individual member states.⁶⁶⁶ In South Africa this emphasis on the need for a comprehensive social security system directly influenced the setting up of the Select Committee on Social Security in 1943, which investigated the existence of social assistance and social insurance schemes in the Union at that time.⁶⁶⁷ The call for social aid formed part of the political landscape in South Africa towards the end of the Second World War, which was characterised by the increased involvement of the United Party in issues associated with social democracy. Briggs notes, in relation to Britain, that 'the new conception' of welfare provision after the Second World War reflected changing attitudes towards citizenship as well as changing views about the proper role of the state:

Concern for 'the citizenry at large' meant taking account of democratic demands not simply seeking to satisfy assessed needs. It was increasingly regarded as a proper function or even obligation of government to ward off

⁶⁶⁴ Report of the National Conference on the Poor White Problem (1934), p.12

⁶⁶⁵ Chisholm (1989), pp.145-149

⁶⁶⁶ McKendrick (1987), p.13

⁶⁶⁷ Hellmann (1949), p.415

distress and strain not only among the poor but also among all classes of society.⁶⁶⁸

In line with social welfare measures in most countries linked to the Allied Forces during the Second World War, the United Party sought to ensure the welfare and protection of those returned from the war, their dependants, their homes and their children from 1945. This was not by way of financial increments or payments, but rather by employment and access to jobs. Many of the needs of 'non-white' soldiers returning from the War were similarly addressed by providing trade and work training which they could supposedly use to gain employment.⁶⁶⁹

The political focus on social assistance issues in urban areas also highlighted the approach adopted by the United Party Government from 1943 to the many social welfare and economic challenges that emerged from the Second World War period. The vast social changes that had been wrought by wartime economic growth had unleashed wide-ranging social conflict in the 1940s. This was linked to the exponential growth of both 'white' and 'non-white' employment during the war. While wartime industrial expansion had significantly helped in reducing 'poor whiteism', it had also led to restrictions around the job colour bar (which had for so long characterised the South African economy) being considerably 'diluted'.⁶⁷⁰ This encouraged rapid wartime wage increases for the growing 'non-white' (especially 'african') industrial labour force and produced acute political uncertainty within the United Party about the exclusion of 'non-whites' from urban centres from 1945.

In the period 1939 to 1945 an additional 134 000 'african' workers had entered industrial employment in urban areas.⁶⁷¹ This presented the United Party with complex dilemmas. On the one hand, the massive influx of 'african' immigrants to

⁶⁶⁸ Briggs, A, 'The Welfare State in Historical Perspective', in Zald (1965), pp.40-41

⁶⁶⁹ Returning from the War, 'coloured' soldiers were trained by the Central Organisation of Technical Training (COTT). One such training centre was established at the Ottery site soon after the Second World War. See Section A

⁶⁷⁰ O' Meara (1996), pp.23-24

⁶⁷¹ O'Meara (1996), p.24

the cities had significantly increased black trade union membership in the urban centres. O'Meara asserts that by 1945 close to 40% of 'africans' employed in commerce and industry were nominal members of the independent trade unions. The unions fought for minimum wages, and for an end to the migrant labour system, and made frequent use of the strike weapon. Militant union activity was at that time firmly linked to unrest around other issues such as housing shortages for 'africans' in urban areas, pass law conflict, liquor raids, transport fare confrontations and food shortages amongst the 'non-white' poor.

These aspects of 'non-white' urban discontent also had a profound effect on formal 'non-white' political opposition in this period, which became considerably agitated and militant in the 1940s. The United Party was concerned at the time to address issues of 'non-white' social discontent to ease the militant stances of 'non-white' political forces at that time, and also in the interests of further economic growth. However, at a time when official state policy was to discourage 'africans' from permanent residence in 'white' urban areas, the United Party adopted a low key approach which focused significantly more on regulating and stabilising the movement and action of 'africans' to the cities than on actually ameliorating the social problems that accompanied rapid black urbanisation. Nonetheless, many liberal members of the United Party were committed at that time to the ideal of pressing for "a common society" which would build on the significant economic boom experienced during the war.⁶⁷²

On the other hand, once the need for a united war effort had passed in September 1945, the long simmering divisions between the various constituent parts of the United Party electoral base had become ever more prominent. While the "anglophone urban manufacturing and commercial capitalists favoured a loosening

⁶⁷² Alexander notes that the members of the United Party who mostly adopted such a view included people like J. Hofmeyr, JD Rheinallt-Jones, Donald Molteno, the Hoernles', Edgar Brookes, Margaret Ballinger, and Alan Paton. See Alexander, PF (1995), *Alan Paton: a Biography*, (Cape Town, Oxford University Press, pp.178-185. Also, Paton, A (1971), *Hofmeyr*, (Cape Town, Oxford University Press - abridged edition by DC Lunt, pp.217-220, p.263, pp.266-277)

of segregationist control over both the labour market in general and urban blacks in particular”,⁶⁷³ the largely afrikaner (farmer) electoral base of the United Party became increasingly concerned about the ‘lack of a formal native policy’ by the ruling government after 1945. There were even deep divisions between the major capitalist sectors that provided the main support for the United Party in the 1940s.⁶⁷⁴ At the time, the varying approaches to the “native question” went to the heart of the interests of both ‘white’ farmers unable to compete with higher urban wages and thereby keep their ‘african’ labourers in rural area, and ‘white’ trade unions in the cities. O’Meara argues that the ruling United Party found itself in an very awkward and ambiguous position in this period:

On all of the major political issues of the day - black urbanisation, the stabilisation of African labour, black trade unions, black housing, political rights for urban blacks, pricing and taxation policy - its major bases of (white) support not only took mutually exclusive positions, but were engaged in increasingly vigorous conflict with each other.⁶⁷⁵

Faced with an inability to recast its “South Africanist, common ‘white nationalist’, bilingual” political approach of the 1930s and present a coherent project which represented the interests of all ‘whites’, the United Party simply could not push through any comprehensive social aid policies for ‘non-whites’ from 1945. Which is of course not to say that the social aid provision for ‘non-whites’ did not significantly increase from 1945. Rather, the particular approach adopted by the United Party in dealing with the problem of welfare provision for ‘non-whites’ in the 1940s was to firmly link the needs of ‘non-whites’ to urban social issues.

The increasing assumption of responsibility for the administration of welfare aid by the Union Government⁶⁷⁶ in the 1940s provided the United Party with the

⁶⁷³ O’ Meara (1996), pp.27-30

⁶⁷⁴ See Posel, D (1991), *The Making of Apartheid 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, p.5)

⁶⁷⁵ O’Meara (1996), p.31

⁶⁷⁶ This could be most visibly seen when responsibility for the administration of ‘native policy’ was taken away from local authorities and placed in the hands of the Department of Native Affairs. The Fagan Commission of 1948 proposed that this kind of ‘parallel’ development of ‘white’ and ‘non-white’ interests would “repair the vast fissures that black urbanisation had opened in the policy of

opportunity to address some of the social welfare needs of ‘non-whites’ as part of its programme to extend state power and control over ‘non-white’ populations. It did so by positing welfare provision as an intrinsic aspect of the ‘security’ and labour needs of the urban ‘white’ population at that time. Two developments significantly informed this process.

Firstly, in the period 1937 to 1950 the provision of social welfare aid was characterised by a system of dual control, but with the Union Government assuming ever-increasing statutory powers at the expense of voluntary effort. This greater authority over welfare provision allowed the Union Government to develop structures of representation and control. The process of state institutionalisation of social welfare provision in South Africa culminated in the enactment of the Welfare Organisations Act No.40 of 1947 which made provision for the establishment of the first Welfare Organisations Board in the history of welfare provision in South Africa. The Welfare Board came to oversee the registration and co-ordination of all welfare organisations on a national basis thereafter and also served as a link between the Union Government and the Department of Social Welfare on the one hand, and the public (voluntary services) on the other.

Secondly, while the Union Government began to exercise significant control over welfare provision in South Africa, it also developed a partnership agreement with the voluntary sector in which it was decided to share responsibility for welfare provision. This policy of state - community partnership in social welfare was very much a trade-off. On the one hand, the voluntary sector would provide services that the Union Government did not have the funds to support. On the other hand, voluntary organisations were allowed a degree of flexibility and innovation in responding to the human needs of many ‘non-whites’. This relationship between the

segregation”. See Union of South Africa (1948), *Report of the Native Laws Commission of Enquiry, 1946-1948 (the Fagan Commission) UG 28/1948*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, paragraphs 17-18). Also see O’Meara (1996), p.33

state and voluntary organisations remained a feature of social welfare provision in South Africa.

iii) *The Period 1951-1980 (the professional era)*

The period 1951 to 1980 can also be broken up into two parts, namely 1951 to 1965 and 1966 to 1980. As the second part falls largely outside the purview of the dissertation, it will not be addressed here.

The period 1951 to 1965 is often referred to as the period of specialisation and consolidation.⁶⁷⁷ It was characterised in South Africa by an emphasis on the profession of social work and on social workers as the operational staff in social welfare provision. Helm notes that the “social work of volunteers became largely supplanted in this period by trained social workers, who represented a new kind of professionalism that was emerging in South Africa at the time”.⁶⁷⁸ The period 1951 to 1965 was also a time when the ‘scientific’ approach had led to social welfare services being increasingly orientated towards the rehabilitation of persons in need, and on understanding the causes of social disharmony. This informed the phenomenal growth of specialised welfare services that sought to address particular areas of need in the period after 1950.

It is significant here that the specialisation of social welfare work from 1950 was considerably aided by the interest and concern of ‘citizens’ from localised areas in human welfare issues after the Second World War and the great amount of flexibility accorded them by the state in providing social welfare services in their localities. The massive increase in the number of community-sponsored welfare enterprises after 1945, coupled with the many innovative ways⁶⁷⁹ that community-

⁶⁷⁷ Kotze (1995), p.131

⁶⁷⁸ Helm, B (1985), p.10

⁶⁷⁹ Kotze notes (citing the work of Edward Batson) that in 1940 almost 75% of 400 organisations involved in a social survey restricted themselves to work amongst ‘whites’, while only 8% of voluntary organisations served ‘non-whites’. He further observes that for reasons of ideology, locality, historical precedent or practical convenience, many voluntary organisations were simply not keen to extend their services to other population groups. See Kotze (1995), p.126

sponsored welfare organisations provided services thereafter, was certainly encouraged by the Union Government after 1948. At the time the South African welfare system was characterised by an understanding of welfare provision best summarised by a Union Education Department official, Dr. F Brummer, in 1936. He noted that:

In South Africa no clear division of the functions of central government, those of the provinces and that of private welfare bodies, is possible. One cannot claim that the State should be responsible for national problems only, as every social problem has a national aspect. Nor can one suggest that mass treatment should be a Government responsibility and that individual casework should fall to the private body. Mass provisions and individual analysis must simply begin to supplement one another in a much more closely related manner. The conclusion reached is that no dividing line is possible between what should be private or public welfare functions. These two services must always exist side-by-side supplementing one another in a planned and co-ordinated fashion and to bring about the best co-ordination of effort between them should be the government's main objective.⁶⁸⁰

The most significant feature of the period 1951 to 1965 was undoubtedly the social policies of apartheid. When the National Party won the general elections in 1948 it sought to give substance to many of the promises that were made during the electoral campaign. Whereas national state departments had previously addressed the 'needs' of all South Africans, from 1948 a system evolved in which welfare services were administered separately by state departments representing the various race-defined groups. Each race-defined group in South Africa was deemed to supposedly have its own culture, heritage and way of life, which also implied that they had very different needs. From the 1950s the National Party created a Division of Coloured Affairs and Bantu Affairs within the Department of the Interior. In line with its vision of co-ordinating all services for 'non-whites' in single departments of state, the separate departments of Coloured Affairs, Indian Affairs and Bantu Affairs were subsequently established. The welfare responsibilities of the Union Department of Social Welfare towards the various 'non-white' groups were then transferred to the respective departments upon their establishment. The Department of Coloured Affairs was established in 1959 and the Department of Indian Affairs in

1961. It is unclear exactly when the Department of Interior via the Native Affairs Department transferred control to the Department of Bantu Administration and Development. According to Helm, this occurred in and around 1963.⁶⁸¹ The Union Department of Social Welfare remained responsible for the welfare needs of the 'white' population. It is thus clear that the focus in the period 1951 to 1965 was on the consolidation of social policy and the planning of separate welfare services. In practice this meant that no new social welfare programmes were started in the period 1950 to 1965.

It also meant that while the partnership agreement between the state and voluntary organisations remained intact, the state began to exert far more control over the way in which voluntary organisations provided welfare aid from 1948. Via a state subsidy system, the National Party was able to virtually oblige non-governmental organisations to conform to a defined state welfare policy. This had enormous consequences for social welfare provision in South Africa. The notion of separate welfare services was thereafter not only applied in relation to state services but also in the private sectors. For example, in 1957 the Department of Native Affairs advised all local authorities and private organisations that provided services to 'africans' that it would subsequently not approve the involvement of voluntary 'white' bodies or racially-mixed committees in social welfare or recreational services for 'africans'. This service had previously been almost exclusively controlled or administered by 'white' philanthropists and clergymen. While the state conceded that a period of transfer was required in which 'non-white' officials could be trained, by 1966 this directive, which compelled voluntary welfare organisations to introduce separate welfare services for the various racial groups, was much more rigorously enforced.

Historically, welfare provision to the 'non-white' population of South Africa had always been meagre or minimal. It has been argued that when welfare services were

⁶⁸⁰ National Conference on Social Work (1936), p.27

⁶⁸¹ Helm (1962), p.70

provided they were not based on issues of poverty but rather on the social and urban needs of 'white' South Africa. It was also previously noted that the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church and the Anglican Church were the predominant providers of welfare aid for 'coloured' people before 1950. It is significant however that church involvement in the provision of welfare relief was limited to educational and institutional facilities.

The separate development policy of the apartheid state from 1948 then put in place a system which really emphasised the divide in the provision of social welfare in South Africa.⁶⁸² This system emerged alongside political structures and systems of social engineering that further increased the differences in standards of living of the various race-defined groups in society. The apartheid system substantially increased the disparities in provision of welfare, education, health and housing services in South Africa. This led to a situation where the majority were not only politically and socially deprived, but also economically impoverished.

In the above history of social welfare provision in South Africa, it was argued that a complex set of motivations has informed the provision of welfare in South Africa since the turn of the century. This included a heavy emphasis on the social, political and economic needs of the 'white' population. It was asserted that the way in which the churches, voluntary organisations and state departments went about providing welfare aid to the various parties was informed by the contextual conditions in South Africa at various times. In relation to 'coloured' boys in the 1940s the nature and extent of social welfare provision for 'coloured' communities was determined by the complex interaction between the church, state authorities and urban municipalities and what they identified as the most important issues with regard to the needs of 'coloured' communities.

⁶⁸² For a discussion of the link to social welfare provision, see Helm, B (1962), 'Chapter 5- Ethnic groups and Social Work', pp.36-49

b) The links between Race, Education, Work and Social Order in the 1940s

In Section A the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in 1948 was seen to have emerged in complex social and political circumstances. The period in which Ottery was established was marked by policy shifts in the way in which the United Party (UP) in the mid-1940s addressed the institutional needs of ‘non-white’ children,⁶⁸³ and also by a shift in the policy discourse (in South Africa and internationally) which highlighted the links between work and education.⁶⁸⁴ There was also greater emphasis, both within the state educational and welfare systems and the church-based voluntary-aid systems during the 1940s, on the relationship between work training and social order in urban areas. These developments emerged at a time when the Union Government Education Department and the Union Government Welfare Department were both battling to reconfigure the basis of welfare and educational provision in South Africa.⁶⁸⁵

During the 1940s the emphasis on making the provision of education, especially in urban environments, more work-related provided a significant twist to the previous emphasis on the teaching of morality-based education as pursued by the churches. This ‘new’ development in educational provision was influenced by an increasing need to address the social order needs of urban communities. For example, in 1938 the Johannesburg municipality commissioned the South African Institute of Race Relations to investigate the problem of ‘bantú’ juvenile delinquency in the urban

⁶⁸³ See Section A

⁶⁸⁴ There was mutual agreement in the 1940s that education needed to be more work-related at a time of unprecedented growth in secondary industrialisation in South Africa. O’Meara (1996), p.22

⁶⁸⁵ The *Cape Times* of 19 March 1937 observed that the (South African) Children’s Act of 1937 was “hailed by the social workers of every civilised country as the most enlightened and progressive piece of legislation of its kind in the world.” It is certainly significant that by 1934 the policies of the Union Education Department were significantly informed by the modern ideas (internationally) linked to issues on social rehabilitation, re-education and the influence of mental hygiene in the treatment of delinquency. See Chisholm (1989), p.294. Also see Union of South Africa (1937), *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Destitute, Neglected, Maladjusted and Delinquent Children and Young Persons 1934-1937 UG 38-1937*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.7)

areas of the Witwatersrand, Vereeniging and Pretoria.⁶⁸⁶ The resultant report subsequently endorsed the viewpoint that ‘bantú’ children in urban areas⁶⁸⁷ not only required access to education, but also that educational provision needed to be more employment-based.⁶⁸⁸ The report noted that “the importance of educational and employment aspects of the problem of Bantu juvenile delinquency may be realised by the following facts:

- a) 64.9% of Bantu delinquents at Diepkloof Reformatory in 1937 had never attended school, and 13.3% had only attended in the sub-standards (before dropping out).
- b) 60% of the Bantu children in Johannesburg attend no school and are not in employment. Not only are existing schools overcrowded but the provided schooling needs to qualify the Bantu child for apprenticeships or at least encourage the development of particular kinds of skills.”⁶⁸⁹

Given that the churches and state departments shared the administrative and financial responsibility for the provision of social institutions in this period, complex links were formulated between education focused on individual discipline and morality, and education that focused on the links between work and social order. These links significantly informed the provision of social institutions for ‘coloured’ children after the Second World War. The interplay between the discursive influence of a ‘work ethic’ and the practical focus on the social control/crime control needs of the various urban municipalities shaped social welfare provision for ‘non-white’ communities in particular ways during this period. Given the limited availability of technical education, compulsory schooling and residential facilities for older ‘coloured’ boys at that time, education and social welfare officials notably

⁶⁸⁶ South African Institute of Race Relations (1938a), *Revised Findings and Recommendations of the Bantu Juvenile Delinquency Conference in Johannesburg in October 1938*, (Johannesburg, SAIRR, pp.1-17)

⁶⁸⁷ In the period 1921 to 1936 the urban ‘african’ population increased from 587 000 to 1,142 000. It was estimated that in 1934 there were at least 10 000 unemployed ‘africans’ in the Johannesburg area alone. See Stadler, A (1987), *The Political Economy of Modern South Africa*, (Cape Town, p.59) and Iliffe, J (1987), *African Poor: A History*, (Cambridge, p.130)

⁶⁸⁸ At the conference in Johannesburg, hosted by the SAIRR, it was argued that education “as a socialising and humanising influence was generally recognised as an effective means of preventing the development of anti-social tendencies. Measures to combat delinquency amongst the Bantu youth must therefore proceed *pari passu* with the provision of greater educational facilities.” See SAIRR (1938b), ‘Findings of the Bantu Juvenile Delinquency Conference’, *South African Outlook*, 1st December 1938, p.270.

responded to the need to provide social institutions for ‘coloured’ boys by establishing a ‘correctional’ facility at Ottery for ‘coloured’ boys.

After the Second World War state welfare and education officials increasingly recognised the ‘advantages’ of using the provisions of the Children’s Act of 1937 to address both the needs of neglected, maltreated and abandoned ‘coloured’ children as well as those who manifested anti-social behaviour.⁶⁹⁰ The use of Children’s Act Schools had also been recommended by the Bantu Juvenile Delinquency Conference in Johannesburg in 1938 which expressed the hope “that magistrates would make increasing use of the corrective-educational methods provided by the Children’s Act with regard to ‘non-european’ children, and that a special modified reformatory be established for those children in conflict with the interests of society where they could benefit from an intensive course of disciplinary training.”⁶⁹¹

Also, earlier in this Section (C) it was indicated that in the period after the Second World War the United Party government was actively engaged in issues related to social welfare.⁶⁹² In this period the focus on welfare aid was strongly informed by international debates on the links between poverty and ‘social chaos’. For example, in the Western Cape the emphasis on institutional provision for ‘coloured’ children after the Second World War was based on the (official) belief that the ‘coloured’ parental home was unable to cope with the social needs of ‘coloured’ indigent children and that weak familial links and ‘undesirable’ ‘coloured’ neighbourhoods

⁶⁸⁹ SAIRR (1938a), pp.1-3; Also see Hellmann (1949), pp.239-242 and pp.268-274

⁶⁹⁰ See Section A. It is significant that notwithstanding the provision of an array of welfare services and a process of committal to protect children in South Africa, the provisions of the Children’s Act of 1937, except for reformatories, were administered only to ‘white’ children before 1948. See Chisholm (1989), p. 294

⁶⁹¹ See SAIRR (1938b), p.269. With the end of the Second World War many disused military sites became available. The greater emphasis on (military) disciplinary training during this period certainly influenced the decision to utilise military sites when establishing large ‘correctional’ institutions for children ‘in need of care’.

⁶⁹² See Marks, S and Andersson, N (1992), ‘Industrialisation, Rural Health, and the 1944 National Health Services commission in South Africa’, in Feierman, S and Janzen, JM (eds), *The Social Basis of Health and Healing in Africa*, (Oxford, University of California Press, pp.155-157)

generally encouraged juvenile delinquency.⁶⁹³ In fact, the Wilcocks Commission Report of 1938 had signalled the projected increase in the provision of state social institutions for ‘coloured’ children in the 1940s and recommended the establishment of large state social institutions that focused on ‘moral’ and ‘disciplinary’ training. The notion that social chaos was encouraged by rampant poverty among communities with weak family structures certainly informed the establishment of the first ‘coloured’ School of Industries.

Furthermore, it has been noted that the provision of better social welfare services and financial aid to ‘coloured’ children in the period after the Second World War was directly related to issues of social order.⁶⁹⁴ Due to the focus in child-care policy on the links between juvenile delinquency and social order in South Africa after 1937, welfare and educational services for older ‘coloured’ children were characterised by an emphasis on ‘disciplinary training’ in that period. Until 1948 this type of ‘training’ was only really available for ‘coloured’ boys at Porter Reformatory.

Yet, while state education and welfare officials in the 1940s certainly wanted to retain the emphasis on ‘discipline’ and ‘moral training’, they were very concerned about the large numbers of ‘coloured’ non-delinquent indigent boys that were being

⁶⁹³ The influence of the writings of WA Willemse in this period is again emphasised here. It was significant in this period that, aware of the effects of rapid secondary industrialisation, many ‘afrikaner’ intellectuals readily expressed their fears about the urban forms of life of the ‘white’ working class. Given the dynamics of rapid social change and the social effects thereof, the link between ‘poor’ social conditions and crime may have seemed rather straightforward and plain at that time. However, Willemse provided a significant twist to the social disorganizational theory of crime. He argued that it was not just the home or the family that explained delinquency, but the racialised home. In this discourse crime was reduced to biology and blood. Crime was ‘brought on’ by mental defectiveness and illiteracy that was (supposedly) rife mainly among ‘non-white’ communities. Willemse argued that crime and poverty was caused by ‘nationally and religiously mixed homes’, mixed marriage homes and homes in which ill-discipline was rampant. See Chisholm (1989), pp.304-309. Also see Willemse WA (1938), *The Road to the Reformatory*, (Pretoria, Van Schaik Ltd), Willemse WA (1932), *Constitutional Types in Delinquency: Practical Applications and Bio-Physical Foundations of Kretschmer’s Types*, (London), and Willemse WA (1940), *Die Sorg van ons Kinders en Jeugdigen*, (Bloemfontein)

⁶⁹⁴ See Section B, Chapter 3 on the ‘medicalisation’ of child-care policy

unnecessarily exposed to the penal environment of Porter Reformatory.⁶⁹⁵ At that time the various Children's Courts in South Africa often committed indigent and non-delinquent 'coloured' boys to Porter Reformatory simply 'to learn a trade' or for their 'residential protection'. In this period, other than at Porter Reformatory, technical education was only available to 'coloureds' at the St Joseph's Trade School (a church-based institution) at Aliwal-North in the Cape Province, at the St Thomas Coloured High School in Port Elizabeth, at the Midland Trades School for Coloureds at Graff-Reinet, and at the 'coloured' section of the Cape Technical College in Cape Town⁶⁹⁶. Before 1948 magistrates, educationalists and welfare officials in Cape Town generally encouraged the committal of younger-than-sixteen-year-old indigent and non-delinquent boys to Porter Reformatory. This problem was highlighted by the Botha Commission in 1956 when it noted that it was "regrettable that a Coloured child had to be committed (to a correctional institution) before he could share in the benefits of sound vocational training", and reflected "that the type of education received by pupils at these types of state institutions would be of great value to Coloured pupils overall."⁶⁹⁷ The availability of educational and technical training services at state 'correctional' institutions thus presented welfare, education and community participants with particular dilemmas in the way in which they went about securing institutional, welfare and educational provisions for indigent 'coloured' children from the late 1940s.

⁶⁹⁵ In a letter from the principal of Porter Reformatory, Dr Van Antwerp, to the Secretary of Union Education in 1946, he asked that 'coloured' boys with welfare needs no longer be sent to Porter. See Central Archives, SAB UOD E14/19C/vol 1, 'Nywerheidskole vir Nie-Blankes Januarie 1946-', letter from Van Antwerp to UED, dated 25/2/1946.

"Die inrigtings van die Volkswelnsdepartement bied nie ambagsopleiding aan nie en as die leerlinge daar 'n gevorderde ouderdom bereik, behoort hulle inderdaad na 'n nywerheidskool gestuur word. Dit is nie meer billik om hulle na my inrigting oor te plaas nie (*The institutions under the Union Welfare Department do not provide their pupils with trade training and these pupils should actually be sent to a school of industries when they reach an advanced age. It is not reasonable anymore to send them to my institution.*)"

Also see Chapter 4 of this dissertation, pp.32-36

⁶⁹⁶ A Mr Jacobs inquired from the Union Education Department in 1948 where he could send his son to be taught the trade of bricklaying and whether it was possible to enrol his son at Ottery School of Industries. The Secretary of Education advised Mr C Jacobs in a letter dated 31/1/1948 that he should approach the noted institutions, and that as the son was not deemed 'in need of care', he could not attend the Ottery institution. See Central Archives (CA), SAB UOD E14/19C/Vol 1, letter dated 31st January 1948

⁶⁹⁷ Botha Commission (1956/7), p.15

It is also significant that the systems of education that provided for 'coloured' children in South Africa during the 1940s were characterised by inefficiency and the absence of general compulsory school attendance. At the time, primary school provision for 'coloured children was predominantly in the hands of the churches. Subsequent attempts by the state to co-ordinate and better regulate the provision of education for 'non-white' children from the 1950s were informed not only by the need to provide greater access to compulsory schooling for indigent 'coloured' children but also to focus on work training. At a time when the urban 'coloured' populations were rapidly increasing, state education and welfare officials (as well as those involved in voluntary aid)⁶⁹⁸ were concerned to provide some of these services to indigent 'coloured' children, keeping in mind the meagre institutional provisions available for 'coloured' children and the increasing concern about social control in urban areas.

In Part One below, the ethos and purpose of an institution like Ottery School of Industries (and the services that such an institution was meant to provide for 'coloured' boys 'in need of care') from 1948 will be analysed in relation to the ambiguous interplay between 'care' and 'rehabilitation' which generally characterised child-care policy in South Africa in the period after the Second World War. This was particularly evident in the changes that had taken place in the period 1934 - 47 with regard to 'correctional' institutions like reformatories and schools of industries in South Africa. From 1937 many principals of the various 'correctional' facilities attempted to transform their institutions into places of 'learning'.⁶⁹⁹ Changes brought about at the 'coloured' Porter Reformatory and 'african' Diepkloof

⁶⁹⁸ An example of the degree of co-operation between state departments and church bodies can be found in the make-up of the Continuation Committee which was formed to investigate the possible formation of a National Council for Children's Institutions in 1952. The Committee comprised Dr. Van Schalkwyk, Secretary for the Union Department of Social Welfare, Mr Grobbelaar, a senior inspector in the Union Department of Education, Dr Erika Theron of the University of Stellenbosch, and senior church officials of the Nederlandse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK), the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church. See Union of South Africa (1952), *The Report of the Continuation Committee of the National Conference on Children's Institutions held at Kimberley in April 1951- G68E(Welf) 2/1951*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.1)

Reformatory (headed by the respective liberal practitioners, WD Marais and Alan Paton) during the period 1934 to 1947, were representative of both international and local trends within child-care policy whereby the ‘rehabilitation’ of youths at the respective institutions was pursued via educative and scientific mechanisms.⁷⁰⁰ Pupils at ‘non-white’ reformatories were increasingly provided with schooling and trade training that it was envisaged would provide them with opportunities to re-integrate into society as useful and employable citizens upon release from state care. Institutional officials regarded this development within ‘non-white’ reformatories as a direct response to the problems of ‘non-white’ urban unemployment and related questions of social control at that time.⁷⁰¹ In the context of the residential child-care programme which operated at ‘white’ industrial schools and trade schools at that time, ‘in need of care’ ‘white’ children were provided with compulsory schooling, technical (trade) training, a daily routine which included three meals, clean clothing and bathing facilities, access to psychological counselling services, as well as (and perhaps most importantly) a stable and disciplined environment in which to grow up.⁷⁰² It is significant for the study that the relevant industrial schools came to be referred to as schools of industries in that period.

⁶⁹⁹ Paton, A (1964), *Hofmeyr*, (London, pp.218-220)

⁷⁰⁰ There are many examples of Paton’s reforms at Diepkloof in biographies written of him. While the influence of his liberalism is acknowledged, it is significant that many changes did not materialise or were not long-lasting. For example, many of Diepkloof Reformatory’s staff were Ossewa Brandweg members and opposed their liberal principal Alan Paton simply because of his political links. Because of the Second World War (when many English-speaking staff at state institutions joined the war), die-hard nationalists replaced most of Paton’s staff at Diepkloof by 1943. The staff complement at Diepkloof and their particular political stance certainly had a bearing on the services that were subsequently provided at Diepkloof. See Alexander, PF (1995), *Alan Paton, A biography*, (Cape Town, Oxford University Press, pp.140-142 and 160-161). Also see Chisholm (1989), pp.25-6 and pp.292-376

⁷⁰¹ Chisholm (1989), chapter 12

⁷⁰² Coloured Advisory Council (CAC) members, as well as other ‘coloured’ community leaders, in the 1940s also called for the provision of industrial schools along the lines of the one provided for ‘white’ boys at George. For example, in a letter from the CAC to the Secretary of Social Welfare on 24th October 1946, it was noted that two teacher members from Cape Town had *officially* toured the South Western Districts in July 1944 to inspect the conditions of ‘coloured’ people in that area. It was asserted that the two CAC representatives (J.Golding and F.Hendricks) had been impressed by the services provided at the George School of Industries for ‘white’ boys and had recommended that a school of industries also be provided for ‘coloured’ boys. See Central Archives (Pretoria), *SAB UOD E14/19C/Vol 1, ‘Nywerheidskole vir Nie-Blankes - Januarie 1946’, letter dated 24/10/1946*. After 1948 both Golding and Hendricks served on the Board of Management of Ottery School of Industries.

The Ottery School of Industries was established to fulfil a similar role. However, the establishment of the ‘correctional’ institution at Ottery emerged at a time when, and in a social context where, the welfare, educational and ‘discipline’ needs of indigent ‘coloured’ boys were primarily being addressed in social institutions focused on ‘control’ and ‘discipline’; places where the boys’ daily upbringing could be vigorously regulated.⁷⁰³ In this regard, the social needs of ‘coloured’ indigent and ‘maladjusted’ children (and the way in which the child-care system responded to their needs) were defined by a policy discourse that emphasised disciplinary and moral training as an intrinsic aspect of social welfare and educational provision.

Furthermore, the history of Schools of Industries in South Africa indicates that these institutions represented very punitive environments. This suggests that education and training was provided for indigent ‘coloured’ boys living on the margins of society for particular reasons in this period, and was informed by a complex interplay between race, punishment, education and social ‘protection’. There can be little doubt that the major aims of the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries was in part to discipline and punish ‘coloured’ boys. State welfare and education officials were most certainly aware of the stigma attached to these kinds of institutions before 1948. To a degree, this contradicted the campaign started in the 1930s to change that image of ‘correctional’ institutions.

⁷⁰³ It has been argued that ‘correctional’ institutions were provided for under-eighteen ‘coloured’ youths as an alternative to committal to reformatories or prison. The Work Colonies Bill of 1927 and 1944 provided for the institutionalisation of older-than-eighteen ‘coloured’ men and was provided primarily as an alternative to prison. A Coloured Advisory Council memo noted in 1945 that there were four essential categories of men sent to work colonies. As the four types of offences were mainly associated with non-criminally minded men who supposedly committed their offences due to circumstances beyond their control, or because of poverty and unemployment, work colonies sought to differentiate those ‘tainted by crime through poverty’ from those who ‘lived lives of crime’. See Cape Archives, TBK KUS, SWL 2/9, Vol 1, ‘*Coloured Advisory Council: Liason Section: Special Problems associated with Crime, Juvenile Delinquency and Penal Treatment in relation to Coloureds*’, memo dated May 1945. The four categories were identified as:

- a) Any person over twenty-one years old who habitually begged; or who failed to provide his wife and child(ren) with food and clothing, and had refused offers of work suited to his capacity;
- b) Any person over nineteen convicted of contravening vagrancy laws or found to be intoxicated in public;
- c) Any person who does not provide financial support for his children, irrespective if married or not;

In fact, one of the pressing questions of the dissertation focuses on why the social needs of 'coloured' boys were addressed in punitive and repressive ways.⁷⁰⁴ It is clear that state provision of trade training and education for 'coloured' indigent boys emerged in a context where both the social needs of 'coloured' indigent boys and the social order needs of the dominant society were being addressed. By predominantly providing education and training facilities at 'correctional' institutions for 'coloured' pupils, it was assumed that they could be (supposedly) transformed into 'stable', 'productive' members of society by teaching them the 'habits of industry',⁷⁰⁵ at the same time that they were 'rescued' from conditions of dire poverty. Committal to the 'correctional' institution at Ottery would presumably also have served to 'physically' remind them of their marginal status within South African society.

In such a situation, even though the reasons for the institutionalisation of 'welfare boys' were significantly different to those for 'coloured' pre-delinquents, there was apparently no need to distinguish between delinquent boys and non-delinquent boys at the Ottery institution. This 'blurring' between delinquent and welfare boys was strikingly evident in the committal process that brought 'coloured' pupils to Ottery School of Industries. For example, six of the nine informants that were consulted in this study (to be identified in Part One) came to Ottery from children's homes as far afield as Johannesburg and Durban. Whilst the reasons given for their committal to Ottery were certainly varied, their 'committals' were characterised by a complex intermeshing of the social and the educational.

At the end of Part One the various contexts of these six informants' transfer to Ottery in the period 1950-1970 will be discussed. It is asserted there that the

d) Any person found guilty of theft.

⁷⁰⁴ A Report of the South African Institute of Race Relations in 1938 theoretically linked the issues of poverty to that of crime. The report asserted that there is "an essential unity in the problems of actual delinquency on the one hand, and destitution, neglect, uncontrollability and maladjustment on the other. Measures with regard to the problem of juvenile delinquency should deal with both phases." See SAIRR (1938b), p.270

decisions by children's homes officials to send the boys to Ottery were not 'rigidly-defined' by the predominant 'social order/social needs' discourse. There were also very pragmatic reasons for sending boys from children's homes to the Ottery institution that were linked to the limited social and educational facilities available at that time. The limited choices available to institutional child-care and educational officials are often overlooked when discussing the reasons for committing 'coloured' indigent and maladjusted boys to 'correctional' facilities in that period.

2. Part One: Social Institutions and 'Coloured' Boys

a) *Introduction*

Foucault argues that the function of penal systems is not simply to punish wrongdoers, nor to focus exclusively on those who transgress the law. They do far more than just 'punish', 'repress', 'conceal' or 'censure'. Rather, they determine particular realities and reflect the 'domains' and 'rituals of truth' of a society. Foucault asserts that also by being able to 'regulate' the general population beyond the 'criminal classes', penal systems project particular images of an 'envisaged society' within which certain power relations are upheld.⁷⁰⁶

Such a structuralist assertion does not however reveal much about the highly contested terrain in which power relations operate. Nor does it ascribe any role to the impact of historical processes in the way in which power relations are determined. For example, in South Africa under apartheid the image of a more rigidly segregated society was transposed onto older policy processes that didn't always neatly pursue the agendas or projected outcomes of apartheid. In many cases the racial agenda of the National Party Government after 1948 was antithetical to the 'modernist' ideas and processes informing the development of a modernising state in that period. In those situations many of the 'theoretical groundings' informing

⁷⁰⁵ Chisholm (1989), p.23

⁷⁰⁶ See Foucault, M (1977), *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, (Aylesbury, Hazell Watson and Vinney Ltd, p.194)

state policy were applied ‘flexibly’, and reflected attempts by the agents of the apartheid state to pursue conflicting policies. It is thus important not to conflate the way in which societies are theoretically and ideologically ‘constructed’ with the rather messy and compromise-filled development on the ground. This perspective is of particular relevance in the context of the evolution of apartheid policy that has usually been portrayed as if the wishes of the founding fathers had simply been transposed onto the social structure in an uncontested manner.

In the earlier discussion of the ideas and processes that led to the establishment of the ‘correctional’ institution at Ottery in Cape Town in 1948, the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries was shown to have been characterised by a series of historically-driven compromises and concessions. The historical account of the provision of a ‘welfarist’ institution for pre-delinquent and indigent ‘coloured’ boys raised a number of uncomfortable and significant questions about the discursive link between poverty and criminality before the 1950s. Because the Ottery School of Industries was established in the ambiguous context of segregationism, social welfare reform and the provision of ‘enlightened’ ‘correctional’ mechanisms to deal with large numbers of indigent ‘coloured’ boys, the nature and shape of the ‘domains’ and ‘rituals of truth’ which governed the lives of boys ‘committed’ to the institution lacked clear definition. Why were certain boys ‘committed’ to the Ottery School of Industries? As far as policy makers and practitioners were concerned, what did a ‘correctional’ institution provide that couldn’t be provided elsewhere? What was it about these specific boys that made them candidates for committal within this institution? How did ‘committal’ to Ottery impact on or shape their lives? And what common experiences characterised the lives of boys at Ottery? These are questions that most government reports and other social enquiries and surveys in child-care have not critically assessed. Yet the questions are fundamental to understanding the impact of this institution.

By focusing on the social histories of nine ‘boys’ who were resident at the Ottery School of Industries in the period 1950 - 1970, this chapter endeavours to provide an

insight into the discourse which informed the running of a ‘correctional’ social institution for ‘coloured’ boys and how Ottery School of Industries impacted on the lives of the boys in its care. The discussion of certain aspects of the life histories of the nine boys will reflect on and illustrate the complex links between state welfare, educational provision and the evolution of racial policy in South Africa in the period after the Second World War. It will also explore how state legislation after 1948 impacted in different ways on each of their lives.

b) Apartheid and institutionalisation

In previous chapters it was argued that the institutionalisation of children was a much more ambiguous and complex phenomenon than has hitherto been acknowledged. The complex web of social and political policies with regard to the indigent classes often ensured that ‘coloured’ boys from vastly different familial backgrounds and for quite different reasons were sent to the ‘correctional’ institution, Ottery School of Industries.

Many of the children who were placed in foster homes and in state institutions after 1948 were there as a result of a series of diverse responses to apartheid legislation⁷⁰⁷. On the one hand, growing immiseration, urbanisation and social disharmony in the period after 1948 had left many ‘coloured’ children neglected, maltreated and uncared for. In the context of the dire poverty prevalent amongst the ‘coloured’ population of South Africa at that time, family disintegration left many mothers unable to cope financially and, often, emotionally with the needs of the family, though this did not always mean they sought to discard their children. In many cases mothers would apply for state aid and simply ‘accept’ whatever state intervention was deemed appropriate to resolve their ‘problems’. On the other hand, the numerous and sometimes unforeseen ramifications of apartheid legislation left

⁷⁰⁷ For an analysis of the effects of apartheid on children outside the family, specifically those in social institutions and those dealt with through foster care and adoption practices, see Burman, S and Van der Spuy, P (1998), “Communities, ‘caring’ and institutions. Apartheid and Child-care in Cape Town since 1948”, in Horden, P and Smith, R (eds), *The Locus of Care: Families, Communities, Institutions and the Provision of Welfare since Antiquity*, (London, Routledge, 1998, pp.239-255)

many parents with little option but to have their children institutionalised. For example, if a child were born as a result of a transgression of the Immorality Act (which prohibited sexual intercourse between ‘whites’ and all ‘non-whites’)⁷⁰⁸ under apartheid, such a child would constitute evidence of a crime that would be difficult to refute. Parents of such a child would most certainly have spent at least six months to a year in jail if charged. It is probable that such a child would most likely have been neglected or ‘unwanted’.⁷⁰⁹

Group Areas and employment rules also often provided the context in which parents were forced to ‘give up’ their children. In the case of domestic workers living on their employers’ premises in a Group Area from which the former were excluded, domestic workers were prohibited from having a child in their living quarters. Repeated police raids, especially in ‘white’ areas, attempted to enforce this. Employers were heavily fined if found condoning such practices, employees were sometimes even jailed, and children were then often (in any case) removed from the mother’s care and institutionalised.⁷¹⁰ In such circumstances many domestic workers either left their children in the care of relatives (even if they were unsuitable) or attempted to find foster care for them. Ironically, many of the children faced with living temporarily with relatives or foster parents subsequently chose to run away from their caregivers. Thereafter they were ‘pursued’ as transgressors of the law and when eventually caught, were institutionalised.⁷¹¹ While it is acknowledged that the examples provided above do not provide an adequate explanation for the large numbers of ‘coloured’ children in institutional

⁷⁰⁸ Miscegenation between ‘non-white’ groups was also discouraged. In one of the life stories that will be dealt with later, a ‘coloured’ boy was removed from his family home when it was found that his guardians and housemates were predominantly ‘african’.

⁷⁰⁹ Burman and Van der Spuy (1998), p.240. Burman cites as evidence an example of a ‘white’ baby abandoned by a ‘coloured’ mother, in Cape Archives, 1/WBG 1/1/1/134, Case B 11223/1966, *The State v Freda van der Merwe*, 31 January 1967. The date of the court proceedings (1967) is crucial to the discussion in this chapter. While apartheid legislation certainly informed the institutionalisation of a number of children, it is unlikely that formal structures to enforce these kind of apartheid laws existed in the 1950’s.

⁷¹⁰ Burman and Van der Spuy (1998), p.241

⁷¹¹ Burman and Van der Spuy (1998), p.240-243

care at that time, the point being made is that besides poverty and neglect, there were many other reasons under apartheid for the institutionalisation of children.

Within the limits set by the apartheid state and child-care policy the various choices made by parents and children alike determined which children were to be raised in state institutions. These determinants were different for each affected family. Distinct problems and needs in diverse localities ensured that the implementation of child-care policy impacted on affected families in very different ways.

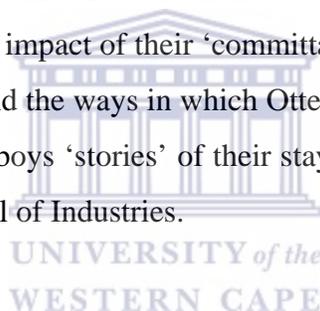
Examples of some of the particular problems and needs of individual 'coloured' families are provided within the brief (compiled) life histories of the nine informants that follow⁷¹². Located at Ottery School of Industries there exists individual institutional files for each of the twelve thousand (and odd) 'coloured' boys committed to the institution since June 1948.⁷¹³ The individual institutional files contain social worker, probational and psychological reports which graphically describe the conditions that led to the institutionalisation of the informants who participated in the project. The social worker reports and child-care worker reports (in particular) contained in the Ottery institutional files relate a multitude of social settings that led to the institutionalisation of 'coloured' boys under apartheid. The life histories are thereafter used within the chapter to reflect the individual lived-experiences of the informants as wards of the apartheid state and its legal courts at Ottery School of Industries, and to show the ways in which the policy discourses of the welfare, education and judicial government departments with regard to 'coloured' children intersected during this period. A significant number of 'coloured' boys were sent to Ottery in the period 1950 - 1970 through a combination

⁷¹² The compiled life histories have been summarised and streamlined to conform to the needs of the thesis. The life histories for the nine informants are available in a longer story form.

⁷¹³ In the period June 1948 till March 2000, more than twelve thousand boys were 'committed' to Ottery School of Industries. The institutional files are indexed according to the number of the boy when he first arrived at Ottery. For example, the first boy who resided at Ottery in 1948 was identified as No.1. Pieter Botha, who was committed to Ottery on the 2/4/1965, was No.2604. A boy who arrived at Ottery in late 1974 would have been the five-thousandth boy to be 'committed' to the institution. His number would have been 5000. As in prisons, the boys were identified according to their institutional number.

of complex and ambiguous policies towards children and a severe shortage in available social institutions for ‘coloured’ children at that time. By highlighting the various commonalities and differences in the life stories of the nine informants, key aspects of the nature of (child-care) institutionalisation under apartheid are addressed. But more importantly, the informants’ life histories are used to reflect the particular experiences and ‘rituals of truth’ encountered by ‘coloured’ boys at Ottery School of Industries that revealed to them the parameters of their future lives.

Section C is hereafter divided into two parts. Brief life histories of the nine informants are provided in the first part. These ‘histories’ include descriptions of the socio-economic contexts that led to the nine boys’ institutionalisation by the state, as well as aspects of their adult lives upon leaving Ottery School of Industries. These ‘representational’ life histories are then used in the second part of the chapter as a backdrop to assess the impact of their ‘committal’ to Ottery School of Industries in the period 1950-1970 and the ways in which Ottery shaped their subsequent lives. In Part 2 of Section C the boys ‘stories’ of their stay at Ottery are told as part of the discussion of Ottery School of Industries.



c) Methodological considerations in ‘producing’ life histories

At the time of conducting the fieldwork for the study (in the period 1996 - 2000) Ottery School of Industries had institutional files for all the boys sent to the institution since its inception in June 1948 (as noted earlier). The files were located in an administration warehouse (previously an airplane hangar) on the institution’s premises in Plantation Road, Ottery, Cape Town.⁷¹⁴ The files include information of Children’s Court proceedings, social worker reports, various institutional reports, child-care worker reports, police reports, psychological profiles and assessments, probational reports, school reports, correspondence between Ottery officials and

⁷¹⁴ These institutional individual files were moved to archival storage facilities held by the Institute for Historical Research at the University of the Western Cape in April 2000.

each boy's family, as well as (Ottery) institutional progress reports.⁷¹⁵ In this study the numbers of the institutional files of the nine informants have been changed to protect the identities of the informants. The nine files are identified only as Files A-H.

Not only are the institutional files vital sources of information about the early lives of the boys (information that would otherwise not have been available for scrutiny), but the files also provide clear indications of how the various boys' social origins influenced their institutionalisation. Furthermore, the files also provide 'evidence' (in the form of their reports) of the guidelines that were used by practitioners when dealing with indigent 'coloured' boys. The various reports contained in the institutional files were in a sense 'productions of knowledge' about 'coloured' indigent boys, in which the ideas and beliefs of the state experts also significantly contributed to the 'production' of documentation about the boys' familial and social origins. Notwithstanding the limitations of the kinds of reports contained in the institutional files, these 'professional' documents served as vital sources of information for the development of the life histories for the boys.

Aided by information contained in the institutional files, and in some cases through extensive use of the Cape Town telephone directory, many informants who were resident at Ottery in the period 1950-1970 were subsequently 'traced'. Informants were informed that the study was a history of Ottery School of Industries and that interviews with them would serve as a separate source of information about the institution. The idea of developing life histories for each informant was also suggested. Nine informants were subsequently interviewed. All but one of the informants was interviewed at home.⁷¹⁶ Their residences were spawled across Cape

⁷¹⁵ While the availability of various kinds of documents for each boy is striking given the dearth of documentation about 'non-whites' under apartheid, the reports in the institutional files are mostly 'factual' and other than the social worker reports do not contain much 'discussion'.

⁷¹⁶ Sedick Edwards lives in a 'hokkie' (shack) in the backyard of a home in Athlone. The 'hokkie' has no windows, electricity or seating arrangements. Sedick was interviewed on three occasions, all outside his home. The interviewer arranged to meet Sedick at Ottery School of Industries on two occasions. The interview was conducted in a vacant administration office. The third meeting was

Town in areas like Matroosfontein, Kuils River, Eikenhof, Kraaifontein, Brackenfell, Hanover Park, Mitchells Plain, Athlone and Elsie's River. The life histories that were developed for the nine informants use information from both individual institutional files and interviews conducted with the informants in 1999.

While two very different sources (primary documents and oral sources) were used to compile the life histories, the life histories are not regarded as comprehensive. Firstly, the 'life histories' are limited by the scope of the thesis. Because they were written in relation to one particular institution (Ottery School of Industries), which all the informants attended in the period 1950-1970, there were many aspects of their lives that were neglected or given little acknowledgement in the 'life histories'. Secondly, other than the interviewer's fairly focused questions on particular aspects of their lives, informants' testimonies were constrained by that with which they were most comfortable. It is probable that many of the informants 'left out' some important events and experiences from their 'stories'. This could have been the result of a desire to be represented favourably, or because of deep psychological scars as a result of institutionalisation, or because informants 'unconsciously' disregarded certain personal events in the light of the 'institutional' focus of the study, or because of the advanced age of the informants. All the informants were over fifty years old and many of their stories were tinged with elements of nostalgia.⁷¹⁷ Thirdly, given that they were subjected to the harsh and sometimes brutal conditions of a penal-like institution, there were many aspects of their lives about which they would simply not talk. Erving Goffman, in his book on 'total

held at the University of Cape Town, where the interviewer had an office that he used for research. By the third encounter, the interviewer had developed a comfortable relationship with Sedick. It was unlikely that meeting in a 'foreign' environment affected Sedick's responses in any way. His life history is also 'special' because no institutional file exists for him. All boys transferred from Ottery School of Industries to Porter Reformatory took along their case files. All information about Sedick was 'acquired' via interviews.

⁷¹⁷ Michael Frisch asserts that in anecdotal oral history all is personalised. Individuals are validated, while others are condemned, but the period referred to, the system, and its institutions are mostly abstracted at the expense of personal experiences. Nostalgia may enable us all to avoid the present - both personal and public - but it also unfortunately clouds the past. See Frisch, M (1979), 'Oral History, Documentary, and the Mystification of Power', *International Journal of Oral History*, 1985, pp.118-125

institutions', notes that these kinds of closed institutions were generally characterised by incidences of sodomy, brutality, constant surveillance, rigid routine and loneliness.⁷¹⁸ It was unlikely that informants would discuss some of their 'more-uncomfortable' experiences (sodomy etc) mentioned above should they have occurred. The life stories are thus not only limited by the scope of the thesis but also by 'subjective' and selective memories.

The life stories do nevertheless reflect very real aspects of the informants' lives. The initial reasons for the institutionalisation of the nine informants, the discussions of their social conditions prior to being institutionalised, their educational and training experiences and particular aspects of their respective institutional lives impacted significantly on the type of work experiences they had upon leaving Ottery, as well as their social experiences as married men with children. While the 'life stories' are not 'complete' stories, they do convey or capture the essence of the informants' lives in relation to the institution, and provide a human face for the experiences engendered by policy discourses towards indigent 'coloured' children under apartheid. All the informants agreed that the period that they spent at Ottery School of Industries had a powerful influence on subsequent developments in their lives and shaped their futures in significant ways.

The method of locating the nine informants also has great significance for the study. Firstly, the telephone directory only contains the telephone numbers of those who are financially able to afford a telephone. Many of the poorer potential-informants would not have been traceable in this way. Also, unusual surnames were preferred given that there were a limited number in the directory. For example, persons with surnames like Abrahams, Adams, Hendricks, Smith, Cupido etc would have been more difficult to find given the large number of listings in the telephone directory. A person with a surname like Gibbons was easier to find as there were few listings in the directory, especially of Gibbons' living in previously designated 'coloured'

⁷¹⁸ Goffman, E (1961), *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*, (New York, Doubleday Dell, chapter 1)

areas. As 'coloured group areas' were also characterised by social stratification under apartheid, it was assumed that most 'Ottery boys' would be found in the poorer areas. One of the abiding legacies of apartheid has been the lack of residential mobility of the poorer classes. The chances of Ottery 'boys' having moved out of their old neighbourhoods were regarded as slim. Also, in Cape Town the poorer 'coloured' communities predominantly reside in areas like Mitchells Plain, Elsies River, Valhalla Park, Bonteheuwel, Delft, Serepta, Manenberg, Hanover Park, Bridgetown, Woodstock, Salt River, Lavender Hill and Lotus River.⁷¹⁹ While many informants were subsequently found in more 'affluent' areas like Wynberg, Athlone, Belhar and Kraaifontein, the focus on the poorer 'coloured' areas (when using the telephone directory-method) did serve as a useful 'shortcut' in the telephone traces.

Another 'shortcut' was to choose those files with surnames that were mostly associated with 'coloured' families under apartheid.⁷²⁰ For example, under apartheid all muslims were either categorised as 'coloured' or 'indian'.⁷²¹ I thus

⁷¹⁹ This is a generalisation. It is not suggested that all the inhabitants of the various mentioned areas are of the 'poorer communities'. Also, there were many areas like Wynberg, Grassy Park, Retreat, Athlone, Salt River and Kensington that were populated by a mixture of rich and poor. The boundaries dividing economic position, social status and religion (to name but a few) among 'coloureds' under apartheid were extremely fluid and unclear. Why some people lived in particular was not always directly attributable to apartheid legislation or economic standing. For example, some people chose to live close to family members who looked after their children during the day while they were at work, especially if they did not own a motor vehicle. Others wanted to be close to religious congregations, for example mosques, and chose areas where fellow congregants predominantly lived. Much research still needs to be conducted on the convoluted network of factors that informed social life under apartheid. For recent work on the topic, see the Journal of Cape History, *Kronos*, which focused, in their 1998/9 edition on the theme 'Genealogies of Space and Identity in Cape Town'.

⁷²⁰ Given the 'mixed genealogies' of 'coloured' boys, it was not uncommon to find 'afrikaner' and 'english' surnames like De Kock, Nel, Willemsse, De Bruyn, Swartz, Eksteen, Gibb, Cameron, Noah and Bailey.

⁷²¹ Muslim 'coloureds' under apartheid were called 'malays'. While it may not be pertinent to note this here, an indication of the complexity of social groups under apartheid was the classification of many 'indian' families as 'malay' so that they could reside in 'normal' (designated 'coloured') areas. One of the factors that led to many 'designated-indian' muslim families *having themselves classified* as 'malay' under apartheid was the residential restriction of 'indians' to only two locations in Cape Town (Rylands Estate and Cravenby). In a family where one parent was 'not of indian descent', such a family invariably sought to be classified 'malay'. This information was derived from what is commonly called 'insider' knowledge. The author's parents are of 'indian descent' and were classified as 'malay' under apartheid.

focused on muslim surnames like Mohammed, Allie, Sondag, Ebrahim or Gabriels, and prominent 'coloured' family-surnames like Golding, Hope, Jacobs, Bruyns, Fredericks or Julies. Nonetheless, of the nine informants whose life stories are described, only three were traced by way of the telephone. Many of those whom the researcher tried to contact by telephone were deceased (in which case a wife or child would inform me thereof), some were sickly or failed to honour appointments, and others were simply not willing to be part of the study.

Secondly, some informants were found by chance. For example, two of the informants happened to visit Ottery School of Industries during 1999. Neither would have been traceable via the telephone directory. One lives in a shack in a backyard in Thornton, Athlone and survives on a meagre pension and has minimal possessions. He visited the institution in the hope of finding a job. While the second informant has access to a telephone, his number is listed under his wife's previous surname. A few years after leaving Ottery School of Industries he had converted to Islam and 'returned' to the institution in 1999 to do missionary work among the boys. There was thus an element of luck in securing interviews with these individuals.

Thirdly, the principal of Ottery School of Industries provided the interviewer in 1999 with the contactable addresses of three people who had been at the institution during the 1960s. Two of them were army officers and had previously been invited to talk to the boys at Ottery about their experiences. The third was the brother-in-law of a staff member.

Fourthly, many people were contacted through information provided by the other informants. For example, one informant recognised 'an Ottery old-boy' working at a shoemaker in Bellville. This 'lead' led to a visit to the Bellville business and resulted in two subsequent in-depth interviews with the 'Ottery old-boy'.

Furthermore, only informants living in Cape Town were interviewed. While the numerous telephone conversations led to a further four informants being traced in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cradock and Port Elizabeth, it was only, from a financial point of view, viable to interview people in the immediate vicinity of Cape Town. Various people also provided telephone numbers and addresses of Ottery-boy friends living in rural districts and urban centres like Durban. These stories could have provided other and possibly contradictory perspectives for the study, but were not pursued further. Also, three possible informants living in the Western Cape expected some financial remuneration for their participation in the study. Initially their participation was contemplated but after they consistently failed to keep appointments over a period of two months and did not respond to telephone messages, they were subsequently excluded from the study. Even though preliminary interviews had been conducted with them certain aspects of their life stories could subsequently not be verified or triangulated. Their stories remain 'incubational'.

The way in which informants were found and the methodology used to record their stories therefore imposed particular limitations on the study. Significantly, the 'stories' that will subsequently be highlighted were not taken from a larger pool of compiled-life histories and later whittled down to the eventual nine informants (according to certain pre-determined criteria or preferences). Rather, the nine informants were the only informants for which 'complete' life stories could be written given the material available in 1999.

There are also other potential problems with the 'chosen informants'. Firstly, only one of the nine informants was born in a rural area. This does not adequately reflect the ratio of rural boys at Ottery School of Industries. The lack of rural representation is further highlighted given that the one rural informant did not return to his rural birthplace upon 'release' from Ottery. Secondly, six of the nine informants were born in the Western Cape. While their stories reveal aspects of the urban experience, the Western Cape urban experience cannot be generalised to

represent the experiences of ‘coloured’ boys who came to Ottery School of Industries from centres like Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Salisbury (in former Rhodesia), Windhoek (in former South West Africa), Kimberley or Bloemfontein. Social realities were obviously different for each locality.⁷²²

For the thesis, the abiding factors that link the stories of the nine informants were simply that they were deemed to be ‘coloured’, they were indigent and in need of state aid or were deemed to be prone to criminal habits, they came from ‘dysfunctional’ families or were orphans, and each of them spent at least three years at Ottery School of Industries in the period under review. The boys’ ‘stories’ are provided as a backdrop to understand the impact of institutionalisation on various developments in their subsequent lives under apartheid.

In Part One the early lives of the nine individual ‘coloured’ boys are presented in the form of ‘life histories’. In Part Two however, the boys’ ‘stories’ of their experiences at Ottery are weaved into the narrative that describes the development of the institution. There are four reasons why aspects of their experiences at the Ottery School of Industries are told as part of the discussion of the institution rather than in the form of individual life histories.

Firstly, it is maintained that the institutional experiences of the various ‘coloured’ boys at Ottery School of Industries should be presented separately from their general ‘life histories’. State social institutions performed particular roles under apartheid, which aimed at ‘changing’ the ‘direction’ of the lives of the children committed to state care. One of the key issues identified in the thesis is the way in which the discourses that informed policy on issues of race, social control, education and welfare provision, and child-care issues in that period, unproblematically linked the issues of maladjustment and poverty when addressing the ‘needs’ of ‘non-white’ children. If a ‘non-white’ child was poor, neglected and lived in a ‘supposedly-

⁷²² Given the overwhelming differences that are apparent in the stories that follow, the lack of a more vigorous and diverse sample is regretted.

unstable' social environment, it was usually argued that that child was a 'potential danger to the social order of society'. The 'easily-derived association' of 'non-whites' with criminality in the period 1948-1968 meant that 'correctional' institutionalisation was encouraged as a necessary measure to 'rehabilitate' or 'protect' such a child.

Under apartheid it was common practice among academic scholars to measure the 'success' or 'failure' of institutionalisation for individual children by the social behaviour and employment record of the individual children in the 'outside world' upon being released from the institution. This meant that, starting at the 'end of the lives of their subjects', scholars (particularly in the Afrikaans-speaking universities) were able for instance to trace the 'criminal indulgence' of an individual (particularly when he broke the law) to his impoverished childhood. This type of research concretised the links between poverty and delinquency. 'Life histories' should not be used in such linear ways.

Part Two of the chapter suggests a more subtle reading of the relationship between poverty, race and delinquency when dealing with social institutions for 'coloured' children in the period 1950-1970, one which focuses on how the discourses of poverty and delinquency converged in a particular social setting to shape the subsequent lives of 'coloured' boys. Part Two emphasises the way in which social institutions for 'coloured' boys under apartheid (and the way they were configured) shaped (and racialised) the lives of 'coloured' boys 'in need of state care'.⁷²³

⁷²³ The emphasis on the social institution also allows for an analysis of the vocabularies used in particular social settings to describe the interaction of the social actors. These vocabularies were generally not spelled out in the discourse that informed the link between the boys and state provision. Also, it is argued in the thesis that the traditional ways of developing linear time lines to explain the lives of various people under apartheid may have been intentional or structural. Linear time lines may have been insinuated in the practice of 'life histories' studies by the need to rationalise various kinds of social lives, or they may have been imposed by 'scientific discourses' prevalent at given times and places. For further discussion of the debates on the role of power

Secondly, no differentiation was made between the various categories of ‘coloured’ boys committed to the Ottery School of Industries. Their different social contexts were viewed through the lens of a particular ‘coloured social condition’. Once the boys entered the institution at Ottery they were all treated in the same way regardless of the rationale for their being there, i.e criminality or indigency. It is significant that no distinction was made at the Ottery institution between neglected, maltreated and abused ‘coloured’ boys and those who were sent to Ottery because of their delinquent behaviour. Both groups of ‘coloured’ boys were treated in exactly the same manner at the institution. It thus did not seem to matter how or why the boys came to be at the ‘correctional’ institution. In fact, much of the individual boys’ social histories and living contexts were discursively erased when they were committed to Ottery School of Industries.

For example, a fifteen-year-old ‘coloured’ boy (Boy A) had passed Std V when he arrived at Ottery in March 1967.⁷²⁴ This fulfilled the entrance requirement to study for a trade certificate (as opposed to just ‘learning to work’ in a trade). When he was released from Ottery after three years at the end of 1969, it was expected that he would successfully re-integrate into society because of his educational ‘success’ at the institution. When Boy A was released in late 1969 he had successfully completed the first two years of the National Trade Certificate (NTCI and NTCII).⁷²⁵ In comparison, another fifteen-year-old ‘coloured’ boy (Boy B) had only passed Std II when he arrived at Ottery in March 1959.⁷²⁶ His trade training at Ottery consisted of ‘learning how to labour’. This suggests a clear distinction at Ottery between vocational education, as derived from old missionary education, and manual education. Boy B spent all his ‘working’ time at the institution doing unskilled manual labour (cleaning up and spade work). When he was released from

relations in various contexts and within various social institutions, see Cross, M and Keith, M (eds) (1995), *Racism, the City and the State*, (London, Routledge, pp.1-10 and 45-57).

⁷²⁴ Ottery School of Industries (hereafter OSIA), File H, “*Half-Yearly Report for 1967*”; See later discussion for methodology used to catalogue the files of the boys consulted in the study.

⁷²⁵ OSIA, file H, “*Report of Principal upon Release from Ottery School of Industries in December 1969*”

⁷²⁶ OSIA, file G(i), “*Social Worker Report of 5/3/1959*” and “*Report Card for 1959*”

Ottery after four years at the end of 1962, he had only passed Std III and was regarded as an educational ‘failure’. This ‘failure’ was regarded as a ‘threat to social order’ and thus Boy B was only released once social workers were convinced that he would not later “fall into crime.”⁷²⁷ From the viewpoint of actually delivering ‘appropriate services’ to the various boys no distinction was made between Boy A and Boy B, even though Boy A was sent to Ottery School of Industries after being found guilty of several acts of theft by the Juvenile Court, and Boy B was an orphan who was sent to Ottery School of Industries for residential shelter and protection in terms of the Children’s Act of 1937 (amended in 1960).⁷²⁸

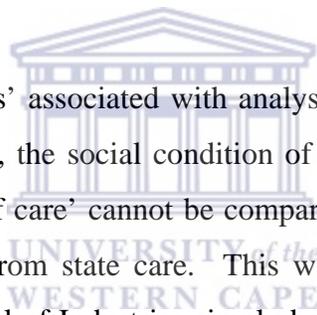
Thirdly, The Ottery institution shaped the lives of the ‘coloured’ boys committed to state care in particular ways, which would not be apparent in ‘individual institutional histories’.

Thirdly, it is clear that the Ottery School of Industries shaped the lives of the nine informants consulted in the study in very particular ways. The ways in which the various ‘Ottery-boys’ responded to life upon being released from state supervision were discursively shaped at the Ottery School of Industries. This was accomplished through the provision of a particular type of moral training, a low level of trade training and academic schooling, and a residential experience within a particular racial setting which, it may be argued, was part of an attempt to create a ‘vision’ of ‘life under apartheid’ outside Ottery. The goal of institutionalisation at Ottery was clearly to introduce indigent ‘coloured’ boys to the ‘acceptable’ ways in which they were expected to behave ‘on the outside’ once they were released from state care.

⁷²⁷ OSIA, file G(i), “*Report Cards for 1959-1962*” and “*Report of a Professional officer of the Department of Social Welfare dated 20/11/1962*”

⁷²⁸ OSIA, file H, “*Social Worker Report dated 14/11/1966*” and file G(i), “*Social Worker Report dated 5/3/1959*”. There is very little value in noting that Boy A subsequently became an armed robber or that Boy B found ‘honest’ work as a cleaner at a bank in Cape Town and still works there after 36 years. There were just too many variables and different social conditions that informed the lives of each of the twelve thousand Ottery boys upon their release from the institution to be able to ‘plot’ their routes of ‘success’ and ‘failure’. The comparison does however provide source for some ironical reflection.

Lastly, There are many problems associated with discussing the lives of 'coloured' boys in relation to one particular period in their lives, ie institutionalisation at the Ottery School of Industries. Many studies have previously used such an approach to 'evaluate' the 'success' or 'failure' of institutionalisation. The only value of contextualising the Ottery experiences of the nine informants within their life stories in such ways would be to show the impact of their individual institutional experiences on their overall lives. It is problematic to use 'life histories' in this way. With no existing 'documentation' about the lives of 'Ottery boys' after their release from state care there is simply no clear-cut way to triangulate the 'stories' of the nine 'coloured' informants about their lives after Ottery. Also, there were simply too many differences in the social and economic conditions of the various boys upon their release from Ottery to be able to make claims about the 'success' or 'failure' of their periods of institutionalisation.



There are also many 'traps' associated with analysing the lives of living beings in linear ways. For example, the social condition of a 'coloured' boy before he was deemed a 'child in need of care' cannot be compared to the social condition of the same boy once released from state care. This was especially evident with boys committed to Ottery School of Industries simply because the majority of 'coloured' boys committed to the institution remained there for at least five years, and most of them did not in any case return to their original social contexts upon being released from state care (especially if they came from areas outside the Western Cape). The linear comparison between the social condition of an individual boy before he was institutionalised and after he was released was quite apparent however in the existing literature on delinquent and pre-delinquent 'coloured' boys in South Africa in the period 1950 - 1980. This method of research was used particularly by academics in Afrikaans-language universities in South Africa to argue that the 'criminal tendencies' of 'coloured' boys could be 'measured scientifically' and be

traced directly to their material impoverishment, and that the ‘proneness’ to poverty and crime was part of the ‘coloured phenomenon’.⁷²⁹

d) ‘Correctional’ Institutions and social conditions

Studies about prisons or any institutions linked to the justice system have much to do with the way particular societies respond to criminality and those persons whom they regard as ‘troublesome’. How it is determined who the ‘dangerous classes’ are depends however on the way in which particular societies are represented and the types of knowledge that inform this representation.

In a previous chapter the findings of the Wilcocks Commission in 1938 were analysed in terms of the ideological representation of ‘coloured’ people in the late 1930s to early 1940s and the way in which the Commission represented the social conditions of ‘coloured’ people. It was shown how the Report made clear links between delinquent activity, bad housing, dysfunctional families, unsanitary living conditions and immoral behaviour, and how this analysis of the social conditions

⁷²⁹ There is a vast untapped literature in doctoral and masters theses in (mostly) Afrikaans-language universities under apartheid, written by academics and professional practitioners that readily used ‘non-white’ subjects to test ‘scientific hypotheses’. See for example Smith, PR (1971), *Die Manlike Kleurling-Jeugoortreder in die Stad*, (Pretoria, University of Pretoria, unpublished Doctor of Philosophy thesis); Brown, MH (1948), *Die Sosio-ekonomiese Agtergrond van Sorgbehoewende Blanke Kinders in Inrigtings in die Westerlike Kaapprovinsie*, (Stellenbosch, University of Stellenbosch, unpublished Masters dissertation); Albertyn, G (1937), *Die Kleurlingmisdadiger in Kaapstad*, (Stellenbosch, University of Stellenbosch, unpublished Masters dissertation); Van der Merwe, CF (1963), “Die Rehabilitasie van Kleurlinggoortreders: ‘n Opvolgstudie van ‘n Groep Oudleerlinge van die Porter-Verbeteringskool van 1953-1955””, *Navorsingsreeks*, no.9, 1963, (Pretoria, Department of Education, Science and Culture: Nasionale Buro vir Opvoedkundige en Maatskaplike Navorsing); Bester, FA (1960), *Die Etiologiese Agtergrond van Kleurlingseuns*, (Potchefstroom, University of Potchefstroom, unpublished Doctor of Philosophy thesis); Carstens, JC (1965), ‘n *Vergelykende Studie tussen Gedragsafwykende Kleurlingseuns in ‘n Nywerheidskool en Kleurlingseuns in ‘n Gewone Skool*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town, unpublished doctoral thesis); Botha, MJ (1982), *Needs, Values and Personal Relations of Juvenile Delinquents as a Basis for Differential Treatment*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town, unpublished masters thesis); Le Roux, WG (1951), *Die Kleurling-Jeugbende in Kaapstad*, (Stellenbosch, University of Stellenbosch, unpublished Doctor of Philosophy dissertation); Du Toit, FP (1942), *Die Werkbekwaamheid van Leerlinge op die Industrieleskool*, (Pretoria, University of Pretoria, unpublished Masters thesis); Kaldenberg, J (1951), *Acquisition and Extinction of the Anti-Social Habits of 200 pupils at Constantia Reformatory*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town, unpublished doctoral thesis); Bester, JR (1966), *Die Kleurling-Jeugoortreder: ‘n Psigodiagnostiese Ondersoek*, (Stellenbosch, University of Stellenbosch, unpublished D.Litt thesis)

among the 'coloured' population had clear ramifications for the way in which the state responded to calls for social upliftment programmes in the 1940s.

Characteristic of expert opinion in this period is the link that is made between social conditions and juvenile delinquency. The Wilcocks Report, for instance, was by no means the only document compiled by 'state experts' to lament the poor social conditions of the 'coloured' population. Professional 'experts' like social workers, medical practitioners, social planners and teachers who were in daily contact with poor and unemployed 'coloureds' made similar links in their professional assessments of the poor. For example, in the mid-1940s, the Medical Officer of the City of Cape Town reported that the housing and living conditions of the 'coloured' population at the Cape were highly unsatisfactory and that the vast majority of 'coloured' people lived in slum conditions.

The social and economic conditions of the Cape Coloured are on the whole unsatisfactory. A part of them have skilled trades and earn good wages but the majority are unskilled labourers. The position is aggravated by the large size of the families, but the family income is eked out when possible by earnings brought in by the wife and children. The measures taken for the prevention and relief of distress are inadequate, and there is no compulsory insurance against sickness and unemployment. There is much undernourishment, and housing accommodation is expensive and bad. The social and cultural level is low. The general level of schooling is low, and there is a lack of discipline in adolescents and a serious problem caused by Coloured delinquency. The social contrast between Europeans and Cape Coloureds is that (and can best be expressed by the statement), whereas in the whites it is only a small minority that belong to the depressed classes, in the Coloured it is the majority. The same contrast can be seen in housing conditions, it is a small minority of Europeans who live in slum conditions, but a majority of the Coloured.⁷³⁰

The Coloured Advisory Council provided an altogether different perspective of Cape Town society (in a completely different setting) in 1944. In appealing to the legal courts for mercy in the sentencing to death of three young 'coloured' rapists,

⁷³⁰ Cape Province (1945-6), *Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, City of Cape Town 1945 - 1946*, (Cape Town, Corporation of City of Cape Town, p.8)

the CAC observed that the boys' environment, adverse home conditions and low 'moral' dispositions had strongly impacted on their maladjustment.

In the case of the three boys, there is clear evidence of family disintegration and low moral values. The one boy was subjected to his mother cohabiting with another man after leaving his father. All the parents showed no interest in the children, and with little education and no dreams the boys degenerated into sexual neurotics. In the absence of cultural backgrounds they were forced by circumstances to indulge in the baser vices of life, chief of which meant associations with prostitutes and criminals. Their ignorant minds were filled with desires which resulted in a crime unparalleled in this country.⁷³¹

Both accounts clearly linked the issues of poverty, low social and cultural levels, bad housing, sickness and delinquency. Both accounts attributed the high rates of criminality and delinquency within the 'coloured' community to poor social conditions.

When assessed in relation to state policy governing children 'in need of care' in the period 1937-1968, these kinds of analyses profoundly impacted on the lives of young 'coloured' boys. The emphasis on the wide social base of 'coloureds' as the root of youth anti-social behaviour provided a climate in which the social circumstances of indigent 'coloured' boys frequently led to their institutionalisation. In relation to indigent and 'needy' 'coloured' children, social worker reports, probational officer reports and the reports of other 'experts' involved in social welfare services during this period frequently commented on what they deemed to be poor and 'undesirable' living and social conditions.

In the following nine life stories, impoverished familial and social conditions were the main reasons given for the nine 'boys' entering the state residential system during the period 1950-70. Seven of the boys were provided with state residential care in order to either 'save' or protect them. The remaining two boys were found guilty by criminal courts of committing acts of delinquency, but were

⁷³¹ Cape Archives (CA), file *TBK KUS Vol 312 ref: SWL 2/9 Part 1*, 'Coloured Advisory Council-Liason Section: Special Problems/Crime: Juvenile Delinquency and penal treatment'.

institutionalised at the ‘correctional’ facility at Ottery when their ‘poor’ social environments were identified as the underlying cause for their maladjustment. These social circumstances subsequently led to the nine informants spending as many as four to five years at Ottery School of Industries.

e) The Social Worlds of Nine ‘coloured’ Boys deemed to be ‘in need of care’

The brief ‘life stories’ of the nine informants that follow describe the social contexts that led to the boys’ institutionalisation at Ottery School of Industries in the period 1950-1970. The accounts then describe aspects of the ‘social lives’ of informants upon release from Ottery School of Industries.

The ‘life stories’ do not include descriptions of life at Ottery School of Industries or at the children’s homes. Their accounts of life at Ottery are included in the second part of the chapter that focuses on the daily ‘workings’ of Ottery School of Industries. The boys’ lives before and after their ‘committal’ to Ottery is provided as background to assess the extent to which institutionalisation at Ottery School of Industries influenced and shaped their lives. The ‘life stories’ describe the various social predicaments encountered by the nine informants and show how their subsequent lives were not only disadvantaged by the effects of dire poverty and family upheaval but also by job colour bar legislation and apartheid social engineering.

The names have been changed in the interests of protecting the privacy of the informants but care was taken to ensure that the substituted names retain a sense of authenticity.⁷³² Informant 1, Ashley Golding, was born in Durban. He was institutionalised in a children’s home soon after his mother’s death in 1946. Informant 2, Lourens Marcus, was born in Johannesburg and was removed from his family home in 1947 because of maltreatment and neglect. He was sent to a

⁷³² For example, Pieter Botha’s real name would not have been Patrick Smith. It would more likely have been something like Morne van Rooyen.

children's home in Cape Town. Informant 3, Jerome Moses, was born in the Strand, Cape Town and was placed in a children's home when his mother was institutionalised at Valkenberg Mental Hospital in 1959. Informant 4, Frank Adams, was born in Claremont, Cape Town. His mother abandoned him (in the care of a granny) at a very young age. When his grandmother approached the Welfare Department in 1958 for state aid, welfare officials recommended that Frank be removed from her care. Frank was institutionalised in a children's home in Parow when foster care could not be secured for him. Informant 5, Walter Petersen, was born in Colesberg, Groot Karoo. Upon the death of his parents Walter worked as a houseboy for a local Afrikaner family. As state child-care policy had come to increasingly discourage this kind of child labour during this period, Walter was removed from the farmer's 'care' and placed in a Children's Home in 1960. Informant 6, Pieter Botha, was born in Tamboerskloof, Cape Town. His mother was a domestic employee who resided on her employer's premises. Based on a complaint by his mother's employer, Pieter was removed from his mother's care and placed in a Children's Home when he turned two years old in 1950. Informants 7, Gasant Hendricks and his twin brother Moegsien were born in District Six, Cape Town and were provided with state 'protection' when their parents died in 1958. They were sent directly to Ottery School of Industries. Informant 8, Gregory Le Roux, was born in District Six, Cape Town and was sent to Ottery when he was found guilty of stealing by the Cape Town Juvenile Court. His case was transferred to the Children's Court when it was 'ascertained' that his social circumstances had influenced his 'delinquent acts'. He was one of two informants sent to Ottery because of delinquent activity. Informant 9, Sedick Edwards, was also born in District Six. He was sent to Ottery because of 'uncontrollability' and because he had assaulted his employer.

The sources: an important methodological note

When referring to the social origins of the nine informants, extensive use has been made of social worker and probation officer reports compiled for Children's Court Hearings. While it is acknowledged that these reports were subjectively 'produced',

magistrates did depend heavily on the reports to inform their decisions. In so doing the ‘produced histories’ came to represent ‘very real’ aspects of the boys’ pasts. The boys’ subsequent lives were very much informed by what magistrates identified as ‘the truth’.⁷³³

Also, because the informants were institutionalised at an early age (before fifteen), they could not remember much about their pasts. When they could recall particular events, their limited recollections were ‘constructed’ from personal memories and those of family members and friends. The way in which informants viewed themselves and the ‘cards dealt to them’ invariably informed their memories. While these ‘memories’ form a crucial aspect of the stories,⁷³⁴ most of the information about their residential and social origins were derived from social worker reports and reports of various child-care-services officials.

On the other hand, descriptions of events in the lives of informants upon leaving Ottery School of Industries rely solely on oral sources. Other than one or two probational reports on the ‘progress’ of Ottery pupils upon ‘release’ from the institution, there is no documentation on their subsequent lives. The informants’ accounts of their lives after Ottery could not be triangulated and are solely ‘their

⁷³³ For example, in court proceedings in the case of informant 4, Frank Adams, his birthday was notarised as November 12. Because he was not present at court to testify to his age, the magistrate ‘determined’ a birthdate for him. On most occasions it was the date of the court proceedings. Frank still celebrates two birthdays, his real birthdate 21 March and his ‘official’ birthdate 12 November. (See Interview 4b, p.1.) This was a common occurrence in Children’s Court proceedings because children were not allowed to attend. In Ottery institutional files there were hundreds (if not more) of boys who celebrated their birthdays on the 1st January.

⁷³⁴ Oral history creates particular historical data within the interaction of the interviewer, interviewee and the historical theme. Since oral history also covers a span of time, it is informed by rings-and-rings of interaction - personal, cultural, as well as political. The question of the role of memory in the interviewee’s relationship with the past is thus pertinent to the analysis. These aspects can either be seen as the particular limitations of using social history or as unique interactive possibilities of exploring the past. See Wieder, A (1988), ‘Oral history and Questions of Interaction for Educational Historians’, *International Journal of Oral History*, Vol.9 No.2, June 1988, pp.132-33. Also see Frisch, M (1981), ‘The Memory of History’, *Radical History Review*, 1981, and Friedlander P, ‘Theory, Method and Oral History’, in Dunaway, DK and Baum, WK (1984), *Oral History: an Interdisciplinary Anthology*, (Nashville, American Association for State and Local History)

points of view'. Also, some 'stories' are more detailed than others, depending on the informant and how 'comfortable' he was during the interviews.

It is notable in the thesis that Afrikaans quotes are included in their original form, along with an English translation, to provide a level of authenticity. This impacted in significant ways on the overall length of the thesis.

Informant 1: Ashley Golding (born in Durban in June 1939)

Ashley Golding was deemed to be 'in need of care' by the Durban Children's Court in May 1947. Welfare officials had asserted in the Children's Court that seven-year-old Ashley lived in social conditions that were deleterious to his upbringing and had recommended that the state intervene in the way in which he was raised. Welfare officials requested that the state provide Ashley with a more 'disciplined' environment to prevent him from 'falling into crime'. Along with his two brothers Ashley was subsequently 'placed' in a children's home in Durban.

Ashley was the youngest of five children of John and Margaret Golding. Margaret Golding had died in late 1946. Soon after her death the Golding family had moved into the home of a Mrs Jacobs in Sydenham, Durban, who also agreed to care for the Golding children during the day. It was Mrs Jacobs who in 1947 alerted the Durban Welfare Department about Ashley's 'social condition'.

Mrs Jacobs told social workers that the Golding children were 'out of control', and ascribed their naughtiness and overall disobedience to the absence of proper paternal supervision. She claimed that stealing had become prevalent in her home after the Goldings' arrival, and that the three younger Golding children (including Ashley) no longer attended school regularly. Mrs Jacobs requested that the state take responsibility for the children's' care.⁷³⁵

⁷³⁵ Ottery School of Industries (hereafter OSIA), File A, 'Probation Officer Report, 2/5/1947'

Mrs Jacobs' testimony to social workers was used as evidence in the Durban Children's Court and led to all the Golding children (including those already in employment) being institutionalised in state residential facilities. Her interaction with the children, their father and social workers crucially informed the process whereby the children were removed from their custodian. It was therefore ironic that while Mrs Jacobs complaint had led to Ashley and his siblings being placed in state care, the Children's Court magistrate cited the overcrowded living conditions in Mrs Jacob's home as the main reason for the children's institutionalisation. The magistrate noted that because more than twenty people resided in Mrs Jacob's four-bedroomed home in 1947, the Golding children would most likely become uncontrollable at a later date.⁷³⁶

Ashley Golding was committed to the St Theresa's (Catholic Church) Children's Home in Mayville, Durban.⁷³⁷ However, after two months at the St Theresa Children's Home, Ashley was transferred to St Francis Children's Home in Cape Town. Prohibited by the rules of St Theresa's to visit his father without permission, eight-year-old Ashley Golding had absconded from the Home on several occasions, each time returning to his father in Sydenham, Durban. In July 1947 welfare officials had then decided to transfer the boy to St Francis Home in Cape Town, notwithstanding John Golding's attempts to have Ashley returned to his care. Welfare officials claimed that Ashley could not be encouraged to "run away from

⁷³⁶ OSIA, File A, '*Probation Officer Report, 2/5/1947*'. When the Goldings' moved into Mrs Jacob's home, there were four other families already living there. The four bedrooms and lounge were occupied in the following way:

1. A Mrs King with her 4 children in one bedroom;
2. A Mr and Mrs. Borrell in one bedroom;
3. A Mr. Ogle, Mrs Jacob's grandfather, and the five Golding children in one bedroom;
4. A Mrs Meele and two children in one bedroom;
5. Mrs Jacobs and the two Ogle children slept in the lounge.

This was indicative of the overall housing predicament of urban working-class communities during that period. Also see OSIA, File A, '*Ruling of the Children's Court dated 19th May 1947*', and the Wilcocks Report (1938), pp.20-1.

⁷³⁷ OSIA, File A, '*Probation Officer Report, 2/5/1947*'. The Social Welfare Department's assessment of the children also reflected that of other 'experts'. The Principal of Sydenham Primary in Durban, where all the Golding children attended school, noted in 1947 that they had been particularly difficult children to work with. Similarly, volunteers of the Child Welfare Society asserted that Ashley was what was known as 'a problem child' and needed the discipline of institutional care.

his problems” and that he needed to be “properly disciplined”.⁷³⁸ Ashley thereafter remained in state care facilities until he reached adulthood. He resided at St Francis Children’s Home for nine years before being transferred to Ottery School of Industries in 1956. In early 1956 welfare and children’s home officials recommended that Ashley be sent to Ottery School of Industries for trade training which he could use to secure ‘worthwhile’ employment upon being released from state care.

Ashley Golding reflected in 1999 that not only had he been devastated by his mother’s death in 1946 but he had then been separated from the only other family that he had, based on the opinions of “outsiders”. When Ashley Golding was ‘released’ from Ottery School of Industries in April 1960 (two months before his twenty-first birthday), he had spent fourteen years in state institutions.

I was sent away because I was very naughty, but not because of stealing or things like that. After Ma died I used to sleep out a lot. I used to sleep a lot by shops--if I worked at a grocery store I sommer slept there in the coal shed. As you grow up, and you know mommys not there, you know you’re all alone and you know all about the difficulties that you’re going to come up against. You must realise that I was almost eight years old before when I came to my senses and realised that my Ma was finally gone. By then my brothers had already been sent away from the Home, and I was alone. There at St.Theresa’s I didn’t know anybody, so I constantly ran away all the time. I was really missing home and my father.⁷³⁹

While at Ottery School of Industries Ashley had visited his brother Reggie at his home in Cape Town on several occasions. Reggie, a sailor, had by the late 1950s married and bought a home in Matroosfontein (just outside Elsie’s River in Cape Town). During these visits Reggie had related many stories of his sea travels, from which Ashley had developed a deep urge to go to sea and explore the world. Ashley had been particularly attracted to the sense of ‘freedom’ that Reggie constantly referred to in his tales and was keen to find a ‘vocation’ that harnessed his sense of adventure.

⁷³⁸ OSIA, File A, ‘Letter from St Theresa’s Home to Secretary for Social Welfare dated 7/7/1947’ and ‘Reply from the Welfare Department (undated)’

That time my brother was at sea and my whole aim was I also wanted to become a seaman. He was on the cargo boats, and visited many, many countries. America, Britain... all those places he went to. When he told me stories about the sea while I was at Ottery. That became my urge and my longing. I learnt my trade - I learnt it well, loved it in fact. But my urge was to go to sea and see the country...⁷⁴⁰

When Ashley was released from Ottery, he promptly visited the Cape Town Docks and posed as his brother. In this way he gained employment on one of the cargo ships. Even though it was quickly discovered that he was in fact Reggie's brother, Ashley was allowed to work 'down below' in the engine-room doing maintenance work. And even though he had no previous knowledge or experience doing this kind of work, Ashley adapted well and "learnt everything he needed to know as he worked". Ashley remained at sea for almost fourteen years until 1973, travelling the world from China to Canada (the only places he noted he had not been able to visit are India and Russia)⁷⁴¹.

Upon his return to Cape Town in early 1974, Ashley Golding secured employment at a dredging company, *Hollands Aannemers Maatskappy*, by using his sea-record book as evidence of his engine-room experience.⁷⁴² He worked for *Hollands Aannemers* for eight years. In late 1982 Ashley moved to another engineering company, *Cape Dredging*. But the liquidation of *Cape Dredging* in early 1984 subsequently left Ashley unemployed. For five years thereafter Ashley 'survived' by using the upholstery trade that he had been taught at Ottery School of Industries to earn a living. During those five lean years, Ashley did 'private' upholstery work. The upholstery trade was very labour-intensive and did not require substantial financial input, but because most of those who 'supported' him came from poverty-stricken circumstances Ashley struggled to make ends meet. In 1989 he secured

⁷³⁹ Interview 1, p.3

⁷⁴⁰ Interview 1, p.17

⁷⁴¹ Interview 1, p.21

⁷⁴² Interview 1, p.21-22; Ashley notes that when he sought work at *Hollands Aannemers*, "I had my sea book with me, that was my qualification - my sea record book. And seeing I was down below, being in the engine room, always maintaining the engines, they took me on. When dredging, I was a machinist - in the engine room. We sucked dams... deepening the rivers...sucking the sea...you know the new docks, we built that".

employment at *Vita-Foam SA* as a general worker. When he was interviewed almost ten years later for the study in 1999, Ashley Golding occupied the same position at *Vita-Foam South Africa*.

Ashley Golding married in 1974 and moved into a home in Matroosfontein, Cape Town, on the southern border of Elsie's River. When interviewed in 1999 he still resided at the same address.⁷⁴³ Ashley Golding celebrated his sixtieth birthday two weeks prior to being interviewed for this study. He has four children and six grandchildren.



⁷⁴³ It was possible to triangulate this assertion. See OSIA, File A, '*Letter dated 6/8/1973 from Ashley to the Principal of Ottery School of Industries*' for references to his residential address at that time.

Informant 2: Lourens Marcus (born in September 1934)

The Johannesburg Children's Court determined on the 26th February 1947 that Lourens Marcus required state care. Lourens' stepfather had been found guilty by a local magistrate of 'parental neglect' in 1946, whereupon the magistrate recommended that Lourens be removed from his parental home. The subsequent Children's Court investigation found that Lourens was 'in need of care' and recommended that he be 'placed' in a children's home.

A Social Worker Report, compiled in 1946, noted that Lourens' stepfather regularly beat him, causing him to run away constantly and seek 'protection' at mission stations and night-shelters.⁷⁴⁴ In early 1946 Lourens' search for food, shelter and clothing during one of his stepfather's 'episodes'⁷⁴⁵ had brought him into contact with Father Trevor Huddleston of Sophiatown.

Father Huddleston subsequently laid a charge of negligence against Lourens' stepfather, claiming that as Lourens' custodian, Edwin Marcus, had ill-treated, neglected and abandoned the boy, thereby causing him unnecessary mental and bodily grief. Father Huddleston testified in the local Magistrate's Court in November 1946 that he had spoken (to no avail) to Lourens' parents on numerous occasions about the boy's 'visible neglect', and contended that the 12 year-old boy's supposedly-uncontrollable behaviour was primarily due to his stepfather's aggressive attitude and his mother's inability to protect him. He reflected in court that even though the mother was aware of the beatings meted out to Lourens, she was not able to explain why she did not approach Child Welfare, nor why she did not find him alternative accommodation at those times when his stepfather chased him away from home. In 1946 the Marcus family lived under what was described in

⁷⁴⁴ OSIA, File B, "*Social Worker Report dated 14/11/1946*

⁷⁴⁵ Interviews with Lourens Marcus on 14/7/1999 and 25/8/1999 (hereafter interview 2A and 2B) Lourens reflected in 1999 that his stepfather neither drank nor took drugs, and that his stepfather beat him because he was 'just that type of person'. "He was not a very nice man and he really did not like me--my mother only realised what type of person he was much later." Interview 2A, p.1

court as ‘fairly reasonable conditions’. This, argued Father Huddleston, reinforced the assertion that Lourens’ neglect was deliberate.

Welfare officials subsequently asserted in the Children’s Court that if Lourens were allowed to continue to roam the streets in search of food and shelter he would ultimately resort to crime to get these items. Welfare policy at the time had begun to focus on discouraging the committal of delinquent acts as a result of poverty and hunger. Preventative facilities in the form of residential care were provided for children like Lourens. Welfare officials also noted that Lourens ‘unnecessarily suffered’ from the effects of a ‘mixed marriage’.⁷⁴⁶ Even prior to the era of apartheid state welfare policy responded unfavourably to such partnerships. In the period after the Second World War South African welfare, judicial and education policy discourses had increasingly begun to highlight the link between ‘race’ and disorder. In later years it became a rigidly enforced aspect of official apartheid policy.

Welfare officials requested in 1947 that Lourens Marcus be ‘placed’ in a children’s home in Cape Town where he would be able to interact with other ‘coloured’ children.⁷⁴⁷ Policy-makers seemed to think (and this is quite apparent in official reports and documents) that ‘coloured’ kids ‘belonged’ in the Cape. In March 1947 thirteen-year-old Lourens was thus transferred to the Lawrencia State Institute in Kraaifontein, Cape Town.⁷⁴⁸ It was initially envisaged that he would remain at Lawrentia until his eighteenth birthday and then be released from state care. But Lourens was transferred to Ottery School of Industries in 1950 and remained at the

⁷⁴⁶ The Social Worker Report of 1946 ‘identified’ Lourens’ stepfather as ‘african’ and his mother as ‘coloured’. See OSIA, File B, ‘*Social Worker Report dated 14/11/1946*’. Also see ‘*Police Report of 11/11/1946*’ in which it was noted that:

For the past three months this ‘native’ child wandered around the streets of Sophiatown, often taken care of by Father Huddleston, who reports that Edwin Marcus has a good, clean home and that there was no reason why he should not care for his stepson.

⁷⁴⁷ OSIA, File B, ‘*Social Worker Report dated 14/11/1946*’

⁷⁴⁸ Lawrentia State Institute was the first State Children’s Home provided for ‘coloured’ children after the Second World War. The Home was apparently named after Minister of Parliament (Cape), Harry Lawrence, who helped establish the institution in the period 1945-47. See Interview 2A, pp.1-2 and interview 2B, p.10

institution till his twenty-first birthday in 1955. Reflecting on the social circumstances under which Lourens was brought up, welfare and children's home officials asserted in 1950 that by sending him to Ottery School of Industries to learn a trade they could ensure that he would find 'meaningful' employment upon release from state care.⁷⁴⁹

Significantly, Lourens' period of institutionalisation was informed by a number of social actors. Father Huddlestone's interaction with social workers and judicial officials in Johannesburg had led to Lourens' initial committal to the Lawrentia State Institute, and the interaction between welfare officials, Lawrentia State Institute officials and the Principal of Ottery School of Industries in Cape Town led to Lourens being transferred to Ottery in 1950. But the 'inputs' of the various social actors were certainly informed by the different social contexts within which interaction occurred. For example, in Johannesburg, state officials were chiefly concerned about the interaction of 'coloured' boys with 'natives' that was deemed to be undesirable. In Cape Town, state officials were mainly focused on preparing 'coloured' boys for the world of work.

At Ottery School of Industries Lourens was taught a trade in boat machinery. Boat machinery had been introduced as a trade at Ottery in 1952 in response to apartheid labour restrictions preventing 'coloured' boys training as motor mechanics and the observation by officials at Ottery that a significant number of boys chose 'to go to sea' upon leaving the institution. Because Lourens had often expressed a desire to become a motor mechanic,⁷⁵⁰ he was transferred to the boat machinery workshop after two years at the institution.

⁷⁴⁹ OSIA, File B, 'Kennisgewing in verband met beweging van leerlinge dated 30/1/1950'

⁷⁵⁰ The motor mechanics trade was confined to 'white' apprentices at that time. Bester asserted during the 1950's that while 'coloured' boys would *probably not* find apprenticeships as motor mechanics, the boat machinery trade would secure them employment in the engine rooms of the many passing ships. See OSIA, File B, 'Notes by FA Bester dated April 1952'. Lourens reflected in 1999 that he enjoyed fixing things and that a short time after arriving at Ottery in 1950 he became 'renowned' as

But providing Lourens with a trade or a ‘tool of self support’ did not necessarily ‘save’ him. While much is made of the fairly rigid labour restrictions and the colour bar that denied ‘non-white’ artisans access to apprenticeships under apartheid, the indigence of the various boys played a significant role in prospective progress in their trades. Alongside the lack of access to apprenticeships or the lack of funds to study further at the limited trade training facilities available to ‘coloureds’ during this period, ‘Ottery boys’ also had to figure out how they would survive outside Ottery upon release from the institution. The nine informants all emphasised the struggle to survive upon being released. Without state support in terms of financial aid or access to employment, ‘Ottery boys’ focused on ‘just surviving’ upon leaving the institution. Pursuing further trade training or employment in particular trades were thus secondary concerns.

When no relatives could be traced into whose care Lourens could be returned in 1955, the Principal of Ottery School of Industries, FA Bester, ‘placed’ Lourens at a firm that could not only utilise his acquired trade-skills but also provide him with residential facilities. In late 1955, Lourens found employment at the Marine Products Corporation in Velddrif, Cape Province (on the West Coast).⁷⁵¹ He worked at the fish cannery factory sealing sardine cans and boarded with a ‘coloured’ family who resided close to his employment. While the rent was high in relation to what he earned, the ‘coloured’ family with whom Lourens resided was regarded by investigating welfare officials as “a stable household which not only provided a ‘conducive’ living environment for Lourens, but also ensured that he was well-fed and that his clothes were clean and neat.”⁷⁵²

Lourens left *Marine Products Corporation* in December 1955 on account of the low wages and the seasonal nature of his employment. He travelled to Port Elizabeth in

an able handiman. This reputation led to him being transferred to the boat machinery workshop in 1952. Interview 2B, p.16

⁷⁵¹ Interview 2A, p.7 and interview 2B, p.17

search of what he imagined to be more lucrative (mechanical) work in the motorcar industry.⁷⁵³

When I went to Laaiplek (in Velddrif) I thought I was going to work on the boats as a motor mechanic. But when I got there they put me on the machines, you know those that seal the tins of the sardines. I had to work in the factories making sure that the steam pots (you had a guy putting sardines into this steam pot) and especially the lids were greased, oiled and working properly. I used to work irregular hours maintaining those machines because as long as there was fish, there was work. But fishing is a seasonal job. No sardines meant no work. Out of season we used to only work two-three days a week, so I thought to myself “hell, this is not what I wanted to do, I wanted to become a mechanic”, so I saw my way out of there and went to Port Elizabeth. Seeing that that was where the cars were being made, I thought that I would easily find a job there.⁷⁵⁴

However, Lourens was not able to find any employment related to his ‘trade’ in Port Elizabeth. In interviews in 1999, he attributed this to the lack of ‘adequate’ educational and trade qualifications and the race-exclusionary Apprenticeship Act.⁷⁵⁵ He reflected that he had to instead ‘settle’ for work at the *Baumanns Biscuit Company*, cleaning biscuit containers.⁷⁵⁶

Going to Port Elizabeth was one of the first things that I did wrong in my life. I didn’t get a job at the car plants because there were hundreds of people waiting there for jobs. And then you know those guys inside used to constantly move between the car companies in the area and take up vacancies. So if they did not know you inside, then you just couldn’t get in. There were so many factories in Port Elizabeth that I thought I could find work in - shoe factories, tyre factories, car plants - and still I couldn’t find work. But I needed money to live, you see, so I tried *Baumanns Biscuit Company* for a job as a casual labourer. Those days they used to pack biscuits in tin boxes and they would label the tins. Well, when those tins came back to the factory they had to be cleaned and the tins had to be reshaped. I got a job cleaning those tins. I had no alternative. I thought to myself “Lourens, you must just work your way out of here”. So I worked

⁷⁵² OSIA, File B, ‘*Letter from MJ Smit to Bester dated 13/9/1955*’. It was noted that Lourens would earn between eight and twelve pounds a month and that his rent would be seven pounds. Also see Interview 2B, p.17

⁷⁵³ OSIA, File B, ‘*Correspondence between Lourens Marcus and FA Bester dated October-November 1955*’

⁷⁵⁴ Interview 2B, p.17

⁷⁵⁵ The ‘white’ trade unions in the motor industry were particularly strong in that period and were largely able to ensure ‘race’ exclusion in the industry.

⁷⁵⁶ OSIA, File B, ‘*undated letter from Lourens to Principal Bester*’ (had to have been written in 1956)

there for three months, bought some clothes and a second-class ticket and came back to Cape Town. But I also left that place because to be 'with the guys' you had to smoke dagga with them and that was really not my line. I even started to drink, so I told myself, "no, you must stop this now". I packed my bags and left.⁷⁵⁷

On returning to Cape Town later in 1956 Lourens found work as a handiman at *Southern Life Insurance Company*. He subsequently worked there for more than 5 years. During this time he wrote regularly to Principal Bester at Ottery. As he had no family or friends outside of Ottery, Lourens would write to Principal Bester and his previous trade instructor at Ottery to inform them what he was doing and how he was progressing. In 1961 Bester wrote to him offering him employment at Ottery as a child-care minder. As the job entailed living on the premises at Ottery and increased wages, Lourens promptly left *Southern Life Insurance Company*.

When I came back to Cape Town, I walked for almost a month before I got a job. I used to have to get up at four or five in the morning so that I could jump train (and then walk between stations and then jump train again) as I had no money to get to places like Maitland. And yet the first job that I could get was organised for me by someone else. The only job that I could get that time was as a cleaner at *Southern Life* in town. Funnily, when I first got there at my work this guy in charge told me that I was overqualified for the cleaner job. So I said, "man I'm willing to do anything". He asked, "Even scrub the floors?" So I said, "yes, I can do that". That was the first thing I used to do in the morning at Ottery - scrub, polish and dust". For three months after that I worked as a cleaner, but then this chappie's boss saw what I could do, so they made me a handiman after that. The boss found out I could plane doors, put in windows, I could paint a bit, I could even see to maintenance work in plumbing, so he made me a handiman and hired someone else to be a cleaner. I worked for five years after that at *Southern Life*. And I'm telling you they weren't happy when I told them I was leaving in 1961.⁷⁵⁸

Lourens Marcus also took up employment at Ottery School of Industries because he was staying in a shed in the backyard of an elderly couple at that time. Going to Ottery meant that he not only secured 'better' living accommodation for seven pounds a month, but he was also provided with three meals a day and his laundry

⁷⁵⁷ Interview 2B, p.18 and interview 2A, pp.18-19

⁷⁵⁸ Interview 2A, p.19

was washed free of charge. Getting a post at Ottery was therefore regarded as “putting him on the way to where he wanted to be.”⁷⁵⁹

Lourens Marcus was employed by Ottery School of Industries in the 1960’s for particular reasons. At a time when delinquency and recidivism had increased substantially at Ottery, Lourens’ knowledge of the institution and the ways in which the boys operated was regarded as an important means to stem the increase in delinquent acts at the institution. An additional reason for his employment at Ottery School of Industries in 1961 was linked to his previous service as a ‘prefect’ at the institution (whilst a pupil). Lourens noted in 1999 that when “I got instructions to do something as a prefect (in the period 1950-1955) I would do it irrespective of what it meant. I was fully aware of why staff members took me along with them.”⁷⁶⁰

Lourens Marcus was employed as a physical-training instructor at the punishment hostel Delta at Ottery School of Industries for eight years thereafter.

As jy weggaan van ‘n plek soos Ottery dan weet jy dat jy geleerd is, dat jy verstaan van hoe die dinge gaan. Toe ek terugkom na Ottery, het ek nog die instincts daarvan gehad. Jy weet, die seuns, hulle dink altyd dat hierdie meneer, hy’s maar net ‘n pop, hy sal nie weet as ons dinge aanvang nie. Hulle het hulle byna vrek geskrik toe hulle uitvind dat ek hulle verstaan. Met die seuns moes ek net streng wees op die regte manier, en op die regte tyd en plek. Praat duidelik met die seuns en maak hom verstaan wat jy wil he. Op die einde van die dag al wat die seuns soek is belangstelling en liefde. Ek was daardie seuns se ma en pa. Ek het hulle geleer om skoon te was, om hul tande te borsel en hom mooi te laat blink. Ek het hulle geleer om skaam te voel as hulle agteruit gaan. Jy weet, as jy ‘n kind soos daai sit in ‘n plek soos Ottery, met net ‘n bietjie aanmoediging gaan jy ‘n veel beter gehalte kind uitkry, definitief. *(When you leave a place like Ottery, you know a bit about life. When I returned to Ottery in 1960 I still had the instincts of the place. You know, the boys, they would think ‘this man’s an idiot and will not know if we do certain things’. They got the fright of their lives when they found out that I understood them. With those kinds of boys you just had to be strict in the right way at the right time and place. Speak clearly and make the boy understand what you want. At the end of the day all the boys wanted was attention and love. I was the boys’ father and mother. I taught them to wash themselves cleanly, to brush their teeth and*

⁷⁵⁹ Interview 2A, p.20

⁷⁶⁰ Interview 2B, p.2

*shine with cleanliness. I also taught them to feel shame when they retrogressed. You know, if you put a boy like that in a place like Ottery, with just a little encouragement you will definitely get a better type of child.)*⁷⁶¹

In 1969 Lourens Marcus was promoted and transferred to the Coloured Cadet Camp at Faure, Cape Town. He remained at the training camp at Faure for eleven years till 1980 when it was closed down. Thereafter he secured (through contacts made while at Ottery) the post of Chief Child-care Supervisor at Faure Reformatory for Boys. Lourens worked at the Faure Reformatory till 1985 when he was transferred to the De Nova Rehabilitation Centre for Coloured Alcoholics. At the age of sixty-two, Lourens retired in 1996. He worked for eleven years as Chief Ward Supervisor at De Nova. When Lourens Marcus was interviewed in 1999 he resided in Kraaifontein in the northern suburbs of Cape Town. His home is located very close to the Lawrentia Children's Home (which was closed in 1954).⁷⁶²

In the interviews conducted with Lourens in 1999, Lourens painted a grim picture of the period (which was somewhat informed by hindsight).

You must remember, after the Second World War there weren't many schools (for 'coloureds') and we had a very hard time. Those were very hard times. Our parents really used to struggle. All those 'coloured' fathers that went to the army, many of them died, some got sick especially with the fatal tuberculosis, and others came back from the war very, very poor. You know, we were all very poor that time and then we still had to pay for school fees and things like that. Most of the 'coloured' people couldn't afford that. But then eventually welfare started taking over, and provided help to some of us. Not only did I benefit from state aid at that time but I then later on also tried to play my part in helping boys with similar backgrounds as myself...⁷⁶³

Informant 3: Jerome Moses (born in November 1950)

⁷⁶¹ Interview 2B, p.6-8

⁷⁶² The original premises of the Lawrentia State Institute was shared by the De Nova Coloured Work Colony and a state old age home, Huis Rosendal, from 1954. From the mid-1960's, it was occupied by the De Nova Rehabilitation Centre for Alcoholics.

⁷⁶³ Interview 2A, p.1

In June 1959 a Children's Court hearing in the Strand (in the Western Cape) ruled that Jerome Moses was 'in need of care' and that he needed to be removed from his mother's custody. Jerome was subsequently institutionalised at the Roman Catholic Mission Station (a certified children's home) at Vredendal.

The Moses family's social predicament was first brought to the attention of welfare officials in the Strand in 1955 when Jerome's parents applied for state assistance in feeding and clothing their children. The family's social circumstances deteriorated with the subsequent death of Jerome's father in 1956 and the medical diagnosis of his mother as 'mentally ill' (a breakdown) in the same year.⁷⁶⁴

In April 1959, a neighbour's complaint at the local police station about the visible neglect of the Moses children led to a social worker investigation. After an inquiry, social workers resolved that it was in the best interests of both mother and children that the children be removed to state residential facilities. Soon thereafter, social workers facilitated Hendricka's institutionalisation at Valkenberg Mental Hospital.

As gevolg van moeder se toestand was die gesin sosiaal nie baie hoog aangeskrewe nie en dit is noodwendig dat die kinders nie die allebeste versorging en toesig ontvang het nie (Because on their mother's condition the family was not positioned well in social terms and so necessarily the children did not receive the best care and supervision).⁷⁶⁵

Because it was envisaged that Hendrika would not remain at Valkenberg⁷⁶⁶ for a long period of time, social workers recommended that the children neither be placed in foster care or be put up for adoption. The likelihood of Hendrika later reclaiming custody of her children thus led to their institutionalisation (according to the Children's Act of 1937) in a Children's Home or certified facility.⁷⁶⁷ But Hendrika Moses died in January 1961 while a patient at Valkenberg Hospital.

⁷⁶⁴ See OSIA, File C(iii), "Social Worker Report of 20/4/1959". Also see OSIA, File C(i), 'Probation Officer Report of 27/2/1963'

⁷⁶⁵ OSIA, File C(iii), "Social Worker Report of 20/4/1959"

⁷⁶⁶ OSIA, File C(i), 'Probation Officer Report of 27/2/1963'

⁷⁶⁷ OSIA, File C(iii), "Social Worker Report of 20/4/1959"

Instead of finding different foster homes for the Moses children, in 1959 the state had endeavoured to institutionalise them “to protect their family and to prevent the breakup thereof.”⁷⁶⁸ Social workers asserted that if the children were placed in foster care this would impact negatively on their eventual reunification with their mother. In any case, it was highly unlikely that a foster home could have been found at that time which would take four young children. Given the context of overall poverty-stricken conditions in ‘coloured’ areas, social workers argued that the children would be better served in state (or state-aided) residential care than in community-based care. Hendrika Moses’ death in 1961 meant however that her children remained thereafter in state institutions till they each reached the age of eighteen.⁷⁶⁹

When Jerome had first arrived at the RC (Roman Catholic) Mission School in 1959 at the age of nine he had never before attended school. In 1965 welfare and children’s home officials determined that Jerome be transferred to Ottery School of Industries because of his “retarded scholastic progress.”⁷⁷⁰ At the age of fifteen Jerome had completed Std II. Welfare and children’s home officials also asserted that Jerome be transferred to Ottery for trade training which would provide him with the means to earn a living upon release from state care (when he turned eighteen). Jerome remained at Ottery School of Industries for four years thereafter and was ‘released’ from the institution in 1968 upon his eighteenth birthday.

In an interview in 1999 Jerome Moses reflected that surviving ‘on the outside’ required the availability of work and that work opportunities were extremely limited in Cape Town in the 1960s.⁷⁷¹

⁷⁶⁸ OSIA, File C(iii), “*Social Worker Report of 20/4/1959*”

⁷⁶⁹ Each of the three Moses boys subsequently spent at least three years at Ottery School of Industries during the period 1959 - 1968. See OSIA, Files C(i), C(ii) and C(iii)

⁷⁷⁰ Jerome’s older brothers had both been sent to Ottery School of Industries by 1965. The eldest, Abel, had been sent directly to Ottery when their mother was institutionalised in 1959. He was already fifteen years old in 1959 and was sent to Ottery for trade training. The second eldest, Sakkie, was ‘placed’ (along with Jerome) at the RC Mission Station at Vredendal in 1959. He was transferred to Ottery in 1963 for trade training.

⁷⁷¹ Interview 3, p.2

I learned a lot about cabinet making at Ottery. But when I came out I found that there was no work in cabinet making for me. The work was very slack, so what was I to do? I just told myself “take any job you can get because it’s hard outside and my sister wanted money for me to stay by her”. I went out and found work in people’s gardens, washing dishes at restaurants and even spent a couple of years working as a sweeper and cleaner at *Southern Life Insurance Company* in Cape Town.⁷⁷²

After a couple of years of being a cleaner, Jerome met a ‘coloured’ ‘carpenter friend’ who offered him R12 a week to be his ‘boytjie’ (assistant). This was more than he was earning at *Southern Life* and also presented an opportunity for him to return to a trade. Jerome subsequently ‘adopted’ an altogether different trade. ‘Learning by labour’ Jerome worked as an electrician-assistant for six years before securing his present employment at *House of Monatic Ltd* in Cape Town. When he was interviewed in 1999, Jerome had been in the employ of the clothing factory for more than twenty years. He currently serves as Chief Maintenance Engineer.

One day I was doing a job with this carpenter friend when I met this electrician from Rhodesia who told me, “Romey, you know your way around spanners and a screwdriver etc so why don’t you come work for me? I worked for that guy for six years after that and learnt everything I needed to know about electrical work and high voltage. When his company went bankrupt they paid everybody out and so I moved on to another company in Cape Town. I came across this clothing company *House of Monatic Ltd* who had a vacancy for a maintenance guy to look after the machines. I had all my facts straight so they took me on. And from then on I had to prove myself. I got my blue book and slowly worked myself up until today, after so many ‘white’ electricians have come and gone, I’m the chief electrical maintenance guy at the factory. I started there in 1978 so I’m working there twenty-one years now.”⁷⁷³

Jerome Moses married in 1978 and presently has five children, the oldest of whom is twenty-three. He bought a house in Mitchells Plain in the early 1980’s and still resides there.

Informant 4: Frank Adams (born in March 1949)

⁷⁷² Interview 3, p.2

⁷⁷³ Interview 3, p.2-3

Frank Adams was found to be ‘in need of care’ by the Cape Town Children’s Court in November 1958. Upon his custodian’s request Frank was provided with state protection thereafter. Initially placed in foster care, Frank was institutionalised at the Holy Trinity Orphanage in Parow, Cape Town in 1961.

Frank Adams was born out of wedlock and left in his grandmother’s care from birth.⁷⁷⁴ His grandmother was at the time living in a boarding house in Claremont, Cape Town, and was already sixty years old. Frank was thereafter christened with his grandmother’s surname and brought up as her own. She nurtured him for eight years, sending him to the St Ignatius Church School in Claremont in 1957. In 1958 Frank’s grandmother applied to the State to place him in alternative accommodation. She asked that the state ‘take care’ of Frank because she no longer had the funds or the living room to look after Frank. She lived in a single room and felt that he was getting too old to sleep in her room.

Noting the strong bond between Frank and his grandmother (social workers claimed that “she spoiled him rotten”⁷⁷⁵), it is unlikely that Frank’s grandmother sought to ‘give up’ her grandson.⁷⁷⁶ It is more likely that the grandmother told social workers (in the subsequent welfare enquiry) a story that she thought would convince them to provide her with state-aid. Alternatively, the grandmother was possibly looking for temporary and ‘better’ living accommodation for Frank. Nonetheless, based on the Social Worker Report the Children’s Court found Frank to be ‘in need of care’ in November 1958 and determined that he be placed in foster care.

It is significant however that the recommendation by social workers that Frank be removed from his grandmother’s care was not based on any ‘maladjustments’ or

⁷⁷⁴ Frank Adams has never met his mother. See OSIA, File D, “*Social Worker Reports of 23/9/1958, 12/9/1960*”. Also see interview conducted at Frank’s home in Kraaifontein, Cape Town in August 1999. Hereafter referred to as Interview 4B, pp.2-3

⁷⁷⁵ OSIA, File D, “*Social Worker Report of 23/9/1958*”

⁷⁷⁶ It is possible that the grandmother was aware of the increased provision of state welfare services to ‘coloureds’ during this period and simply sought to benefit financially from Frank’s ‘colour’. While it is unlikely that state legislation regarding ‘mixed households’ was rigidly enforced, once the Welfare Department became aware of the ‘mixed’ composition of Frank’s home life, he was never allowed to return to his grandmother’s care again.

attempts to help his grandmother care for him. A Social Worker Report observed in 1958 that Frank was essentially raised in a ‘mixed’ household that according to apartheid policy was not deemed conducive to a ‘normal’ upbringing. The relevant social worker noted at the time that:

Aangesien die gesin hoofsaaklik met naturelle assosieer, het hulle morele kodes verwater en hulle lewensstandaard gedaal. Die grootmoeder maak melding van allerlei kattedwaad wat die kind aangevang het, maar ek beskou dit geensins in ‘n ernstige lig nie. Die grootmoeder beskou die kind as ‘n las en rusverstoorde en meen dat sy (Irene) lank genoeg verantwoordelikheid vir hom aanvaar het. Netsoos die moeder van die kind leef die grootmoeder ook met ‘n naturel wie glad nie kan verdra om met hierdie kind in dieselfde kamer wat hulle huur te wees nie (*The family chiefly associates with ‘natives’ and thus their moral and living standards have dropped. The grandmother claims that Frank is naughty but these claims must not be taken seriously. Irene has simply grown tired of looking after Frank and seeks to be released from that responsibility. Just like her daughter she lives with a ‘native’ who refuses to even have the boy in his company. They regard the child as a burden*).⁷⁷⁷

The social worker subsequently asserted that Frank’s ‘social condition’ was caused by the “clash of cultures” that he had been exposed to and recommended that he be removed therefrom.⁷⁷⁸ While it was state policy at the time to keep families together as much as possible or to provide mechanisms whereby family members would eventually be reconciled, apartheid legislation discouraged the upbringing of children in ‘mixed’ households. Frank was thus placed in ‘coloured’ foster care.

Die vermoede bestaan dat Frank verstandelik vertraag is, maar dat hierdie vertraging ook moontlik veroorsaak kan wees deur die swak versorging en gebrek aan belangstelling tuis. Die kind se botsende kulturele invloede kan ook ‘n verdere gevolg gehad het op sy algemene vordering. Byself is hy onmiskenbaar ‘n kleurling in voorkoms, en is dus ook in ‘n Kleurlingskool toegelaat, terwyl sy huislike omgewing tans oorwegend deur naturelle-involed gekenmerk word. Die grootmoeder werk meestal, en verdien ses pond per maand by a blanke familie in Claremont. Die kind lewer geen gedragsprobleme en kan moontlik in ‘n normale kleurling pleeghuis volle ontwikkeling en normale aanpassing bereik. (*While it is possible that Frank is mentally ‘retarded’, it is probable that this backwardness is a result of a weak upbringing and lack of interest at home. The conflicting cultural influences that the child has been exposed to could have had a detrimental*

⁷⁷⁷ OSIA, File D, “Social Worker Report of 23/9/1958”

⁷⁷⁸ OSIA, File D, “Social Worker Report of 23/9/1958”

*effect on his overall progress. While he is unmistakably coloured and was allowed into a coloured school, his home circumstances are chiefly characterised and influenced by 'natives', especially since his grandmother spends much of her time doing housework for a 'white' family in Claremont and is rarely at home. The child does not present any behaviour problems though and will probably adjust and fully develop in a normal coloured household.)*⁷⁷⁹

Frank was subsequently 'placed' in the home of a 'coloured' foster-mother in November 1958. Although the foster-mother was already sixty years old at that time, her living conditions in Maitland, Cape Town and her good, stern demeanour were deemed appropriate to Frank's needs.⁷⁸⁰ Frank remained in foster care until September 1960 when his foster-mother 'returned' him to state care. State welfare officials then transferred Frank to the home of an aunt on his mother's side. Although his grandmother had requested that Frank preferably be returned to her care, social workers felt that the grandmother's living conditions and associations were 'confusing' Frank. This attitude was exemplified by the changing of Frank's surname from the "african-sounding Karembe" to the "more-coloured Adams" in subsequent state reports.⁷⁸¹

Frank remained at his aunt's home for but one month before returning to Bonnytown Place of Safety in Wynberg in November 1960. Unable to find other foster parents and unwilling to return him to grandmother's care, state officials then transferred Frank to the Holy Cross Orphanage in Parow, Cape Town in February 1961. He remained at the certified children's institution till January 1964, at which time he was transferred to Ottery School of Industries.⁷⁸²

⁷⁷⁹ OSIA, File D, "Social Worker Report of 23/9/1958". Also see Burman and van der Spuy (1998), pp.239-244, where they discuss the impact of apartheid legislation on child-care provisions.

⁷⁸⁰ A social worker described the foster-mother as a "respectable and neat" 'coloured' woman with very 'white' features. She (supposedly) had a "quiet, easy-going personality" which permeated her home. As a foster-mother she was given a state foster-care grant to provide Frank with the required motherly love and care. See OSIA, File D, "Social Worker Report of 23/9/1958"

⁷⁸¹ OSIA, File D, 'Social Worker Report of 12/9/1960'

⁷⁸² OSIA, File D, 'Letter from Department of Coloured Affairs to the Holy Cross Orphanage dated 8/2/1961'

Frank was transferred to Ottery School of Industries when the Holy Trinity Orphanage was forced to relocate because of the Group Areas Act. A smaller orphanage was built in Elsie's River and a number of the children had to be transferred to other institutions. Fifteen-year-old Frank was sent to Ottery School of Industries so that he could also 'learn a trade'. Frank remained at Ottery for four years. He was released from Ottery School of Industries in December 1967 because he had finished all the schooling the institution could offer.⁷⁸³ The school subsequently 'placed' him in the care of his aunt in Retreat and arranged employment at a tailor's in District Six.

The school gave me a letter and told me to go and see this tailor in District Six who was supposed to further 'my studies' as a tailor. There I just did alterations but decided to leave after a few months because of the bad wages. I had just come out of Ottery and only had the khaki and blue suit that they had given me. I had no other clothes. I also needed money to pay board and lodging and this guy was only paying me R13 a week.⁷⁸⁴

Upon leaving his work in District Six, Frank found work as a labourer at *South African Railways (SAR)* where he was paid R41 per month.⁷⁸⁵ He only remained at SAR for three months and joined the army in November 1968. Just before he had left Ottery in 1967 a friend who had joined the army had told him of the available opportunities in the army. As he was struggling to come to terms with 'civilian life', Frank thus decided to enrol at the Cape Coloured Corps at Kuils River, Cape Town.

When I left Ottery, I had tried to live and work on my own at first. But I had spent my whole life around boys and I couldn't take the loneliness. I had to be around other boys and that was why I decided to join the army. I didn't go to the army thinking of making a career there. Rather I couldn't handle the loneliness of civilian life.⁷⁸⁶

After a year's basic training at Kuils River, 'coloured' recruits had to choose one of five trades that they could pursue in the army. These were as a driver, chef,

⁷⁸³ OSIA, File D, 'Letter from the Principal of Ottery to the Chief Social Worker, dated 31/8/1967'

⁷⁸⁴ Interview 4B, p.5 and p.11

⁷⁸⁵ OSIA, File D, 'After-care Report from Coloured Affairs to the Principal of Ottery dated 26/9/1968'

⁷⁸⁶ Interview 4B, p.5 and p.10

musician, storeman or clerk. Frank first sought to become a chef but later settled on doing a storeman's course.⁷⁸⁷

Frank transferred to the Castle in Cape Town in 1969 as a storeman. He remained in this position at the Castle for twelve years thereafter before moving to the Maintenance Unit (also in Cape Town) in 1981. He then transferred to Namibia (then South West Africa) where he worked for seven years before returning to the Castle in 1989. After thirty-one years in the Defence Force (as a storeman), Frank Adams 'retired' in December 1999. He took the government package offered to state employees as a result of rationalisation and aims to use the money to set up a business.

Frank Adams met his wife in Ceres in 1971. He married in November 1972 and settled in the rural town. Because he was stationed at the Castle he resided in the singles' quarters at the Wynberg Military Base during the week and returned to his home in Ceres over weekends. Frank subsequently moved to Kraaifontein in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town. Frank has six children.

Informant 5: Walter Petersen (born in May 1948)

The Children's Court in Colesberg determined in May 1960 that Walter Petersen was 'in need of care' and that he should be provided with state 'protection'. Due to his orphaned status, Walter was 'placed' in a children's home in Pofadder.

Walter Petersen's parents died when he was very young (in the mid-1950's). In an interview (hereafter Interview 5) conducted with Walter Petersen at his home in Brackenfell in August 1999 he recollected how he had witnessed his mother's death. His mother had been bed-ridden and Walter and his siblings used to look after her. His elder brother Willem would make sure that the stove near his mother's bed was always warm (by putting wood in the stove) and Walter used to feed her and bring

⁷⁸⁷ Interview 4A, p.4. Also see OSIA, File D, 'After-care Report from Coloured Affairs to the Principal of Ottery dated 26/9/1968'

her water. One day he had heard a scream and when he got to his mother's room she was on fire. A piece of wood had fallen out of the stove and set the bottom of her blankets alight. She burnt to death.⁷⁸⁸

Because his eldest brother and sister were already working when their parents died, they took custody of Walter and his two brothers. The Petersen family lived in the 'coloured' farm-worker 'location' on the outskirts of Colesberg. Walter's eldest brother and sister worked respectively as a farm labourer and domestic servant on a nearby farm. Because they worked very long hours and at times did not return home some days, neighbours and other house-members 'watched over' the boys.⁷⁸⁹

The boys were registered at a school in Colesberg. But due to poverty and lack of interest they rarely attended school. In an interview in August 1999 Walter reflected that on most mornings he would depart to school (Sub A) without breakfast and in the clothes in which he had slept the night before, and that when he did eat in the morning it was the food left over from the previous evening. On most days, once at school he would ask to visit the toilet and then not return to class for the rest of the day. He would spend his day looking for food.⁷⁹⁰

Walter only attended school for a short while. From 1957 his 'guardians' decided to keep him at home on the basis that they could no longer afford to send him to school.⁷⁹¹ Thereafter, Walter spent all his time during the day wandering the 'location' looking for things to do. Furthermore, by 1957 Walter was the only 'child' at home. As his elder brothers had reached maturity, they left the family home and migrated to urban Johannesburg in search of secure and rewarding employment.⁷⁹²

Jy sit in daardie klaskamer and jy's honger en al waarvan jy kan dink is kos. Op 'n sekere tyd dan vra jy maar vir die juffrou of jy toilet toe kan gaan, dan

⁷⁸⁸ Interview 5, pp.8-9

⁷⁸⁹ OSIA, File E, "Department of Social Welfare- Report of Professional Officer dated 19/5/1960".

⁷⁹⁰ Interview 5, p.2

⁷⁹¹ OSIA, File E, "Department of Social Welfare- Report of Professional Officer dated 19/5/1960"

⁷⁹² OSIA, File E, Department of Social Welfare- Report of Professional Officer dated 19/5/1960"

gaan jy nie weer terug klaskamer toe nie. Jy gaan liever iets loop soek om te eet. En meestal het ek ‘gesteel’. Ek sou in mense se yardte ingaan and vrugte van hul bome steel of watal. Maar sekere dae het ek in skool gebly, ek dink dit was op Donderdae of Vrydae. On daardie dae het ons kos gekry - Cocoa of Milo, peanuts, kaas, brood, you-name-it. Op daardie dae het ek tot 12 uur op skool gebly maar nadat ek ge-eet het was ek weg. By daardie tyd het ek baie vriende gehad wat saam rondgedwaal het gedurende die dag. Ons het alles saam gedoen. In daardie Colesberg skool het ek geen skoolstandard so ver as ek kan onthou geslaag nie. Ja, ek was al twaalf-jaar-oud voordat ek Sub A geslaag het. *(You sit in the classroom and you’re hungry and all you can think about is food. After a while you ask the teacher if you can go to the toilet and then of course you don’t return to the classroom. Instead, you go looking for food. On most occasions, I would steal. I would enter people’s yards and steal fruit from their trees, or whatever. But there were certain days when I would stay at school till 12 o’clock. I think it was on Thursdays or Fridays. On those days the school would give us food- Cocoa or milo, peanuts, cheese, bread, you-name-it. But after I ate I would leave. By that time I used to move around with a group of friends and we used to play truant together. When I was at that Colesberg school I didn’t pass anything. In fact, I was already twelve-years-old before I eventually passed Sub A.)*⁷⁹³

In 1958 ten-year-old Walter left home and found employment as a houseboy with a ‘white’ family living on a smallholding in Colesberg. For a modest sum of money and regular food and shelter Walter was expected to clean the Coetzee home and garden daily. The Coetzee’s were an elderly couple whose grandson lived with them so that he could attend a nearby school. Because Walter slept at night in the Coetzee’s kitchen he spent most of his free time playing with the Coetzee-grandson and participated in most of the family’s activities. In an interview in 1999 Walter ‘fondly’ reflected that he was “very happy” during his two years in the Coetzee’s ‘employ’ and that he only left the Coetzee home in 1960 at the insistence of local (district) social workers.⁷⁹⁴

In early 1960 Walter was accused (along with a few other boys) of breaking into a home in Colesberg and stealing cheese and a bunch of keys. When his ‘criminal case’ was brought before the local Magistrate in May 1960, Walter’s young age and

⁷⁹³ Interview 5, p.2

⁷⁹⁴ Interview 5, p.2

‘obvious impoverishment’ ‘swayed’ the magistrate to convert Walter’s case into a Children’s Act Enquiry. Upon further investigation by social workers it was ‘determined’ that Walter’s ‘thievery’ was not indicative of criminal tendencies but rather as a result of the impoverished social conditions in which he found himself. It was noted that Walter “had stolen to quell his hunger as a result of terrible and unfavourable living circumstances.”

Dit is vir my duidelik dat sedert sy vroegste jeug die jeugdige geen doeltreffende versorging en opvoeding ontvang het nie. Sedert sy ouers se dood is hy aan homself oorgelaat. Op sy jeugdige ouderdom moes hy self ‘n stryd voer om aan die lewe te bly en in sy materiele behoeftes te voorsien. Die plaaslike polisie is al lank bekend met sy omstandighede en het al sy geval onder my aandag gebring. Noodwendig het hy nou in aanraking gekom met die swak elemente in die lokasie wie meegebring het tot sy neiging tot misdaad. *(It is clear that Walter has not received a decent upbringing and effective care from a young age. Upon his parents death he was simply left to fend for himself. At his young age he was forced to survive on his own and see to his own material needs. The local police have been aware of his case for some time now and have previously informed me thereof. It is significant now however that Walter has befriended the ‘bad elements’ in the ‘location’ that contributed towards his tendency to steal.)*⁷⁹⁵

The way in which social workers characterised the ‘problems’ in Walter’s social life is of particular significance here. In the social worker report, the district social worker recommended that Walter be ‘placed’ in state residential care to firstly remove him from his “bad neighbourhood acquaintances”. Secondly, the district social worker was “concerned to also discourage indentured labour”⁷⁹⁶ and thus sought to remove Walter from such a situation. Even though it “seemed that Walter was being well looked-after by the Coetzee’s”, social workers were motivated by a number of other factors in removing Walter from the care of the Coetzee family. This indicates that great care needs to be taken when interpreting information in social worker reports.

Walter was ‘placed’ in a children’s home in Pofadder in 1960. Twelve-year-old Walter had not yet passed Sub A by that stage and it was argued that by residing at a

⁷⁹⁵ OSIA, File E, “Department of Social Welfare- Report of Professional Officer dated 19/5/1960”

children's home he would be afforded the opportunity to return to school.⁷⁹⁷ Walter resided at the state-aided (Dutch Reformed) NG Sending Herrberg in Pofadder for four years thereafter. In 1964 the Principal of NG Sending Herrberg noted that because Walter was already sixteen years old and only in Std III, he could no longer attend 'normal school'. Because the home had no other facilities to keep 'scholastically retarded children' busy during the day, it sought to transfer Walter to 'alternative placement'. The Children's Home had initially resolved to 'return' Walter to his family in Colesberg.⁷⁹⁸ But social workers were unable to trace any of Walter's family members. Walter was thus transferred to Ottery School of Industries (on the 10th September 1964).⁷⁹⁹

Walter was transferred to Ottery because he was 'scholastically retarded' and because welfare and children's home officials believed that he could learn 'about life' at Ottery.⁸⁰⁰ Walter remained at Ottery School of Industries for three years. After army recruitment officers visited the institution in December 1967, Walter decided that he would join the army. He had heard about the opportunities in the army from ex-Ottery boys who had enlisted previously.

Ek het nou 'n ander vision gehad van die army. Toe ek 'n lighie was het ek altyd van die oorlog flieke gehou toe ek bioscope toe gaan. Van kleins af wou ek 'n soldaat wees, ek het nie eers geweet wat 'n soldaat doen nie maar die vrouens het mos gehou van soldate. Toe die ouens daar aankom en ons vertel van die army het ek gese daai is wat ek wil doen. Ek wil hardloop en iets in my hand he. Toe ek vir die prinsipaal se, wou hy eers he dat ek Std VII klaarmaak. Maar ek het gese, "nee, ek wil nie 'n dime langer by Ottery wees nie", toe laat hulle my gaan. Hulle het eers hard probeer om my mind te change. Hulle het vir my gese, "as jy 'n hoer standaard het en hy kom in die army sal dit beter gaan." Hulle het mos van beter geweet, hulle was die ouens wat die army gemaak het. Maar ek wou van niks weet nie, ek wou net

⁷⁹⁶ OSIA, File E, "*Department of Social Welfare- Report of Professional Officer dated 19/5/1960*"

⁷⁹⁷ OSIA, File E, "*Department of Social Welfare- Report of Professional Officer dated 19/5/1960*"

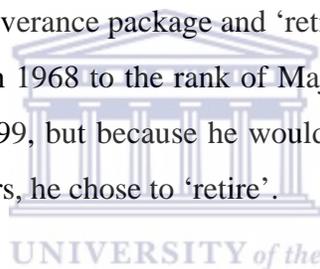
⁷⁹⁸ OSIA, File E, "*Letter from Department of Social Welfare to Principal of NG SendingHerberg dated 19/11/1962*". Noting that Walter was due to be 'released', the Chief Social Worker reported that Walter's brother and sister were no longer resident in Colesberg and could not be found. A similiar inquiry was made in 1964.

⁷⁹⁹ OSIA, File E, "*Report on pupil and application to transfer child to another institution dated 10/9/1964*"

⁸⁰⁰ OSIA, File E, "*Letter from Department of Social Welfare to Principal of NG SendingHerberg dated 19/11/1962*".

wegkom, toe gaan ek army toe. (*I had a different vision of the army. As a child I used to always enjoy war movies when I went to the bioscope. From small I always used to say 'I want to be a soldier' and even though I didn't know what soldiers did, I knew women liked soldiers. When the recruitment guys came to Ottery in December 1967 and told me of the opportunities I decided then and there that that was what I wanted to do. I wanted to be able to run freely and have something in my hand. When I told the school principal, he wanted me to first finish Std VII before I went to the army. He felt that I would have a better chance of success if I completed Std VII. He would know, his 'kind' made the army. But I didn't want to listen. When I got to Ottery I was only supposed to stay two years. I didn't know why or what I did to stay longer, I just wanted to get out of Ottery as soon as possible, so I went to the army.*)⁸⁰¹

Nineteen-year-old Walter was transferred to the South African Cape Coloured Corps at Kuils River in February 1968. Thereafter he spent thirty-one years in the army. In February 1999, upon hearing that he was to be stationed in Pretoria, Walter decided to accept a state severance package and 'retire' from the army. He had risen from the rank of Private in 1968 to the rank of Major in 1997. Walter would again have been promoted in 1999, but because he would then have had to remain in the army for a further five years, he chose to 'retire'.



As noted before, under apartheid 'coloured' recruits were only allowed to become chefs, drivers, storemen or clerks in the army.⁸⁰² After his one-year basic training Walter had chosen to pursue the driver's course in 1969. Thereafter he was transferred to the Castle in Cape Town where he served as a driver.⁸⁰³ In 1972 Walter decided that he wanted to become an instructor. He thus returned to the military base and completed the required courses.⁸⁰⁴ During the following eighteen years Walter was a driving instructor, a parade-ground instructor and a physical training (PT) instructor. He continued to enrol in various courses and was gradually

⁸⁰¹ Interview 5, p.7

⁸⁰² See OSIA, files F and D

⁸⁰³ OSIA, File E, letter from Walter Petersen to the Principal of Ottery dated 18/6/1971. Also see Interview 5, p.8

⁸⁰⁴ See OSIA, File E, letter from Walter to Principal of Ottery dated 22/11/1979. His return address was listed as Wynberg Military Base where he was stationed.

promoted from a Private to the rank of Warrant Class I in 1990. In 1991 Walter decided that he wanted to become an officer. By 1998 he was a Major.

When I became Class I, I was already in my forties. At the age of forty-two (1990) I asked myself, “what can I still do in the army, they said you can only go on pension at the age of sixty-five, so what was I to do?” I was already top in the field in the rank that I had. So I decided to become an Officer. They said, “are you serious, you’re only forty-two?” So I went for the interviews, tests and stuff. In 1991 I went to Heidelberg for the officer courses, and as I completed various courses I rose in the ranks from a Warrant Class I to a Major. I was completing another course at the Army College in Gauteng in 1998 and would have been promoted on completion. But they wanted me to stay a further five years in Pretoria and I just couldn’t stay away from home anymore. You must realise that when I left Cape Town in 1991 I was first posted in Kimberley, then Johannesburg, then Pretoria. And my home was here in Eerste Rivier. My wife and daughter needed me.⁸⁰⁵ (my translation)

Walter married in 1976. Walter and his wife adopted a daughter in the 1980’s.⁸⁰⁶ They reside in Eerste Rivier in the northern suburbs of Cape Town.

Informant 6: Pieter Botha (born in October 1948)

Pieter Botha was removed from his mother’s care when he was two years old and placed in a children’s home in George. Pieter was found ‘in need of care’ by the Cape Town Children’s Court in October 1950.

Pieter’s mother was a domestic employee who worked in Tamboerskloof, Cape Town. She gave birth to Pieter while in domestic employment. When her employer lodged a formal complaint with the police in July 1950 in relation to the two-year-old boy residing on her premises, Pieter was removed therefrom.⁸⁰⁷ Pieter was ‘placed’ at Bonnyton Place of Safety in ‘Q-Town’ (Kewtown), Athlone, whereupon officials recommended that a Children’s Court Enquiry be held.

⁸⁰⁵ Interview 5, p.8

⁸⁰⁶ Interview 5, p.10

⁸⁰⁷ While Sandra Burman’s observation that domestic employees were not allowed to have their children live with them at their place of employment is directly pertinent here, it seems unlikely that this apartheid law could have been ‘operational’ as early as 1950. See Burman and van der Spuy (1998), p.241

In the subsequent Children's Court Enquiry in October 1950 social workers reflected that Pieter's mother was single and that the nature of her employment was not suitable for the adequate care of children. Attempts were thereafter made to place Pieter at prospective foster-parents. Because it was envisaged that Pieter would return to the care of his mother at a later stage, social workers initially sought to place him in the care of relatives. When they were unable to secure this kind of foster care, they recommended that the Children's Court classify Pieter as a child 'in need of care' and order that he be institutionalised.

It is noteworthy that Pieter's mother's ignorance as to the name of his father during the Children's Court hearing was used to indicate her 'sedelikheid' (lack of virtue, loose morals) and her incapacity to adequately care for children. Further evidence placed before the Court by the probation officer also noted that Pieter's father was a "native" and that he was "supposed to have been convicted for assault (details unknown)."⁸⁰⁸ While it was not specified why these observations were included in the Social Worker Report, it does indicate that Pieter was also deemed to be a 'child in need of care' on the basis of other 'unofficial' criteria.⁸⁰⁹

Pieter remained at Bonnytoun Place of Safety for two years. In 1952, at the age of four, he was transferred to St Mary's Orphanage in Rosemoor, George, where he resided for eleven years. Thereafter he was transferred to St Joseph's Trade School in Aliwal-North (in 1963) to 'learn a trade'. Fifteen-year-old Pieter could not adjust

⁸⁰⁸ OSIA, File F, "*Probation Officer's Report of 3/11/1950*", p.2

⁸⁰⁹ See Section B, Chapter 1. Michel Foucault has noted that while the passions, instincts and anomalies of those 'accused' were usually introduced in court to explain the actions of the 'accused' in question, it was in fact these passions and anomalies which were often judged and punished. See Foucault, M (1977), *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, (Aylesbury, Hazell Watson and Vinney Ltd, pp.17-18). Also see Section A, in which it is shown how the characterisation of 'coloureds' as a 'immoral', 'thieving' and 'virtueless' community influenced state policies.

to the adult environment of the trade school in Aliwal-North⁸¹⁰ and in April 1965 was transferred to Ottery School of Industries⁸¹¹.

Pieter did not reside at Ottery for a long period of time. Because of his ‘advanced’ trade qualifications and because he had already completed the highest schooling grade that Ottery offered, the Principal of Ottery School of Industries ‘placed’ Pieter in the ‘special care’⁸¹² of a Mrs Du Toit of Rondebosch,⁸¹³ Cape Town, in January 1966. Principal Bester believed that the policy of ‘special leave’ was a more favourable and viable alternative to institutional care and recommended that Pieter remain with Mrs Du Toit till 1969, when he turned twenty-one.⁸¹⁴ Pieter was expected to be her ‘houseboy’, and in return would be clothed, fed and provided with accommodation. More importantly, he would be inducted into the ‘world of work’ and taught what was expected of him.

At the Du Toit home Pieter lived in the “servants’ quarters” and was locked-in at night. Even at Ottery Pieter had never been subjected to such confinement. He noted that:

Ja, they locked me up at night, those people. The first day when I came there they locked me up when I finished my work. They were Germans those Boere, with Baas-that, and Nooi-that. I told them, no way, I’m not used to that kind of talk. They would say, ‘en dit is klein-baas, en dit is klein-nooi (this is ‘sir’ junior and ‘madam’ junior)’. ‘Toe se ek vir hom, nee. Ek het nie so groot geword nie (*So I told him that I was not brought up that way*). *The way I grew up, they didn’t teach us things like that at the Orphanage. I told them I’m going to run away. And that’s what I did. But first I had to make friends with the big dogs in the yard. I was thin, you see, so once I*

⁸¹⁰ The St Joseph’s Trade School was a church-run technical college that accepted all those (‘coloured’) interested in learning a trade, including adults. While Pieter passed all his subjects at the institution, the Principal of St Joseph’s argued in 1964 that Pieter was “struggling to adjust socially” and returned him to the children’s home in George. After a few months Pieter was transferred to Ottery. See OSIA, File F, “*Report on progress of pupil dated December 1964, St Josephs School*”

⁸¹¹ OSIA, File F, “*Report on pupil and application to transfer to another institution in terms of the Children’s Act of 1960, ref:KW 3148, dated 19/1/1965*”

⁸¹² ‘Special leave or care’ was a discretionary practice at institutions like Ottery, where pupils could work outside the institution ‘on probation’. Should the child not ‘behave’ appropriately on the outside, the institution could then recall the child.

⁸¹³ From reports in Pieter’s file, it was discovered that Mrs Du Toit was a staff (administration) member at Ottery at the time. Her surname and address were falsified to conceal her institutional status.

⁸¹⁴ OSIA, File F. As reflected in a later report, which outlined developments in 1966. See “*Report on the Progress of the Pupil and an Application for the Further Retention of Pupil*”, dated 17/8/66

*made friends with the dogs all I had to do was slip through the burglar bars on the door and there you go, off to the station. Early on that third morning I was sitting on the station waiting for the first train to Town.*⁸¹⁵

Pieter ran away after a few days. When he returned to Ottery School of Industries he was severely disciplined.⁸¹⁶ At that point Pieter's carpentry instructor intervened on his behalf. He convinced the Ottery administration that because Pieter was his 'best pupil' he would be far better employed to 'bring money in' for the institution than to do housework. Pieter was thus allowed to remain at Ottery.⁸¹⁷

Pieter remained at Ottery School of Industries for a further eight months till he was transferred to the Cape Coloured Corps in Eerste Rivier on the 31st October 1966. During those eight months at Ottery he worked exclusively in the carpentry workshop, presenting work for public display and purchase. At one such 'showpiece' at Porter Reformatory in June 1966 Pieter met up with some army scouts.

They also had a parade. I spoke to one of the guys, and after that I went to Bester and they decided to let me go to Eerste Rivier. But they put me there only for two weeks, for a trial period. When I came back, I decided that was the life for me.⁸¹⁸

Pieter reflected in 1999 that it was actually his trade instructor's brother-in-law who had first encouraged him to join the army. He had informed Pieter that he could also 'practice his carpentry trade' in the army, and that the army represented a more stable environment and source of income than 'life on the outside'.

In the army Pieter started as a driver. He envisaged a short stay in the army because he sought a quick transfer to the navy where carpentry was offered. But one day an 'old recruit' approached him and suggested that he train in catering.

He came to me and said, 'come do catering, man, that's the job for you'. I said, 'no way, man, that's a moffie's job, only moffies cook'. And then he said, 'you know, when you leave here, with catering you can work in a hotel,

⁸¹⁵ Interview 6, p.8

⁸¹⁶ Interview 6, p.7; See OSIA, File F, "Record of Offences dated 3/2/1966" and "Other reports dated 26/1/1966 and 2/2/1966"

⁸¹⁷ OSIA, File F, "Application for further retention of pupil", dated 17/8/1966.

⁸¹⁸ Interview 6, p.19

at a restaurant, you can even open up your own business'. So I said, 'really'. And that's how I started catering. That was in 1967 and I've been in catering ever since. The funny part is that I forgot all about carpentry...I never touched it again...catering, that's my job. I love making food. Really, I enjoy it...⁸¹⁹

Pieter was transferred from the *SA Coloured Corps Centre* in Kuils River to the Durban Military Base in early 1968. He spent two years there and attained the rank of Lance-Corporal. When the army authorities sought to transfer him in late 1969, he asked to be 'placed' at the Wynberg Military Base. Thereafter Pieter spent eighteen years at the Wynberg Military Base, working as a chef. Pieter was officially (medically) boarded from the army in 1993.

I started as a private in 1968. I was two years in Durban, in 1968 and 1969 and had a rank of Lance-Corporal. At the end of 1969 they transferred me back to Eerste Rivier and then on to Wynberg. By that time they made me a Corporal...let me see that was 1969, 70, 71, 72. In 1975 they made me a Sergeant, in 1977 a staff Sergeant, and in 1984 a Sergeant-Major. In 1988 I had a operation on the back of my head, something to do with my brain, you know, headaches and lameness down my whole right side of my body. In 1993 I was then medically boarded...I still receive money from the army...⁸²⁰

Pieter Botha married in 1979 and has three daughters. They reside in Kraaifontein, Cape Town. Presently, being at home every day he runs a weekly soup kitchen for poor, hungry and neglected children at the Bloekombos settlement.

You must remember, I was an orphan that spent all my life in a children's home. So now I'm working with other children. That's now my greatest love... because I didn't get love, I must give love. I give them soup and bread whether they're 'black' or 'white'. And even if there isn't enough, I don't worry, because tomorrow is another day. I'm working now with 400 children every week... Tomorrow I'm making soup again for them. I fetched the bread here in Kraaifontein this morning, and later on I will make the soup and some food. It doesn't matter if local shops don't support me sometimes, I just take what I can because I take those children like my own children...They always say if you reach a child, you can reach a parent...and that's how I work for the church and our community...⁸²¹

⁸¹⁹ Interview 6, p.19

⁸²⁰ Interview 6, p.20 and p.23

⁸²¹ Interview 6, p.17

Informant 7: The Hendricks Twins, Gasant and Moegsien (born 23rd August 1944)

Gasant Hendricks and his twin brother Moegsien⁸²² were deemed to be ‘in need of care’ by the Cape Town Children’s Court in April 1959. Because they were orphans and they were already fifteen years old, the twins were transferred to Ottery School of Industries.

Residents of District Six, the Hendricks’ children were orphaned in 1958 when their mother died as a result of sugar diabetes. Their father had died in 1954.⁸²³ While the eldest child undertook to care for her siblings, she could not be both breadwinner and care giver and thus approached the Cape Welfare Department for assistance in 1959. While she initially asked only for monetary aid, at the subsequent Children’s Court hearing she requested that the state institutionalise the twins. Her age and her long irregular hours as a waitress caused her to struggle in looking after her siblings.⁸²⁴ Neither Gasant nor Moegsien were accused of any delinquent or uncontrollable behaviour.⁸²⁵

In an interview with Gasant Hendricks in 1999 he asserted that his sister had been “afraid at that time that they (Gasant and Moegsien) would grow up like skollies (‘thieves’) without daily supervision”. She had thus decided that their interests were best served by their being ‘sent away’.⁸²⁶ As the twins were already fifteen years old in 1959, welfare and ‘Coloured Affairs’ officials discouraged their committal to a certified institution (i.e a children’s home). The twins were transferred instead to Ottery School of Industries.⁸²⁷

⁸²² According to institutional files on Moegsien and Gasant, their plight was simultaneously addressed by social welfare policy. They received the same care throughout their institutionalisation. Their history is thus presented as one life story.

⁸²³ OSIA, Files G(i) and G(ii), “*Report of the Society for the Protection of Child Life (SPCL), Cape Town Branch, dated 5/3/1959*”

⁸²⁴ OSIA, Files G(i) and G(ii), “*Report of the Society for the Protection of Child Life (SPCL), Cape Town Branch, dated 5/3/1959*”

⁸²⁵ OSIA, Files G(i) and G(ii), “*Children’s Act Enquiry dated 9/4/1959, ref:33/2/4/60/59*”.

⁸²⁶ Interview 7, p.2.

⁸²⁷ At fifteen years old, it was believed that the boys’ interests would be best served by trade training at an Industrial School. In the 1950s both state education and welfare policy ‘discouraged’ children

Gasant and Moegsien were committed to Ottery School of Industries due to their siblings not having the economic means to care for them. They did not need state supervision or care. They sought state shelter for a limited period until their sister was financially able to care for them again. However, because they had been committed to state residential care Gasant and Moegsien were only allowed to leave Ottery School of Industries after they turned eighteen years old, even though their sister had sought to have them released into her care as of February 1960. Gasant and Moegsien remained at Ottery School of Industries for three years and were 'released' therefrom in 1962 when they turned eighteen.

Thereafter both Gasant and Moegsien went to work for the *SA Railways* at Culemborg in Cape Town. Loading crates onto trucks in an open yard did not appeal to Gasant and after three years at *SA Railways* he found alternative employment at *Santam Bank* in Cape Town. When Gasant was interviewed in 1999 he still worked at *Santam Bank*, nearly thirty-four years later. Moegsien also left *SA Railways* in 1964 to work at a clothing factory in Salt River but returned to *SA Railways* after about two years. Moegsien was still working at the railways when he died (of natural causes) in 1989.⁸²⁸

Gasant married Mariam Abrahams on the 2 October 1966 and moved in with her parents at their home in Chiappini Street in the Bo-Kaap. A few years later (in 1970) he was granted sub-economic housing in Hanover Park by the City Council. When interviewed for the study in 1999, Gasant and his family still resided at the same address in Hanover Park. Gasant has seven children and four grandchildren.⁸²⁹ Moegsien never married. Instead, he maintained a quiet and lonely existence in the home of his sister until he died in 1989. Neither Gasant nor

over the age of fourteen years being committed to certified institutions. See Section B, chapter 2. Also see Interview 7, p.2

⁸²⁸ Interview 7, p.13

⁸²⁹ Gasant's married children reside nearby in Hanover Park. See interview 7, p.20

Moegsien ever used the trade training that they were taught at Ottery School of Industries.

Informant 8: Gregory Le Roux (born February 1952)

Gregory Le Roux was sent to Ottery School of Industries in early 1967 because of his delinquency. Gregory was caught stealing in October 1966. When he ‘appeared’ in the Juvenile Court the magistrate decided to convert his case into a Children’s Court hearing upon hearing the social conditions under which he was brought up. The magistrate subsequently ruled that Gregory was ‘in need of care’. Gregory⁸³⁰ remained at Ottery School of Industries for three years thereafter and was released into his mother’s care in 1969.

Gregory’s father was an alcoholic. Drunkenness had not only led to him often being sacked from his job and it also made him sick (heavy bouts of eczema) and prevented him from working. The Le Roux family survived on the earnings of Gregory’s mother who worked as a cook at a hotel in Sea Point, Cape Town. Gregory’s mother was described by social workers in 1966 as an ‘exemplary individual’, who was prepared to ‘die’ for her children.⁸³¹

In 1965 Gregory’s father was ‘committed’ to the *De Novo Rehabilitation Institute for Coloured Alcoholics*. The father’s absence from home coupled with the mother’s over-long work-hours consequently left Gregory unsupervised during the day and on those evenings that she was at work. By this time Gregory had ‘joined up’ with a group of boys who regularly stole and committed other anti-social acts. Notwithstanding the ‘loving care’ that was provided for him at home, Gregory (now Anwar) retrospectively reflected in 1999 how he had ‘enjoyed’ the adventure and thrill that the gang’s acts of ‘intrigue’ provided. In an interview with Gregory at his

⁸³⁰ Gregory converted to Islam in the 1970’s and changed his name to Anwar. In this study I use his ‘christian’ name only as it is in relation to Ottery (while he was non-muslim) that I use his history. This may be confusing at those places in his story when he had already converted. See interview 8, pp.1-2

⁸³¹ OSIA, File H, “*Social Worker Report dated 14/11/1966*”

home in Elsie's River in July 1999 he noted that although he grew up in a loving home and that his mother always provided everything he needed in life, he had for many years partaken in 'illegal acts' just for 'the fun of it'.

In September 1966, Gregory was 'caught' stealing for the first time and given 6 lashes at the Cape Town Police Station. But on that same evening, Gregory accompanied his friends and once again broke into a nearby store, stealing some six-dozen towels. When he was apprehended and found guilty of theft in October 1966, instead of again receiving corporal punishment, the Cape Town Juvenile Court decided to convert his case into a Children's Court hearing. At this hearing he was deemed to be 'uncontrollable' and therefore a child 'in need of care'.⁸³² He was subsequently institutionalised at Ottery School of Industries.

Gregory was 'committed' to Ottery because of his 'deviant' behaviour. However, his 'uncontrollability' was also attributed to his father's alcoholism and the 'bad' and 'undesirable' neighbourhood in which he resided. Welfare officials asserted that Gregory needed to be withdrawn from the 'influence' of these 'weaknesses'.⁸³³ His 'favourable' and 'upright' ('gunstige en opregte') mother was deemed to represent a 'coloured' woman doing her best in a 'bad situation'. Gregory's subsequent institutionalisation was thus also regarded as an attempt to 'help his mother', especially considering the 'absence' of 'anti-social' traits among his other siblings.⁸³⁴

In 1969 Principal Bester of Ottery asserted that because Gregory could not receive schooling higher than Std VII at Ottery, he should be put to work as soon as possible.

Die leerling is reeds in Std VII en kan hier nie verdere opleiding ontvang nie. Dit sal goed wees as hy 'n kans kan kry om homself in die samelewing aan te pas en werk te kry. Hy sal 'n knap handlanger wees vir 'n elektrisiese (of

⁸³² OSIA, File H, "Order of the (Children's) Court, dated 17/11/1966"

⁸³³ OSIA, File H, "Social Worker Report dated 14/11/1966", p.3-4

⁸³⁴ OSIA, File H, "Order of the (Children's) Court, dated 17/11/1966", and "Social Worker Report dated 14/11/1966"

enige soortgelyke werk). (*The pupil is already in Std VII and cannot receive any further training. It would be better to give him the opportunity to adjust to life in his community and to find work. He would be an excellent handyman/unskilled assistant for a qualified electrician, or any similar trade*)

Upon release from Ottery in December 1969, Gregory secured employment at *All Electric* in Sea Point. Gregory worked as an electrician-assistant at *All Electric* for three years thereafter (1970-2). During that time probation officers described his progress as ‘highly satisfactory’.⁸³⁵ But because ‘coloureds’ couldn’t be apprenticed as electricians in that period because of apartheid ‘colour bar’ restrictions, Gregory became increasingly disillusioned with his employment. In 1972 he also began to fraternise with his old neighbourhood friends again and partake in criminal acts. When he left his employment in late 1972 Gregory, over a period of time, became a confirmed thief and participated in numerous armed robberies thereafter.

I owed my mother something so I had to go and work, you know, and that also saved me from getting another means of livelihood. You know mos the alternative to not working was always that you had to steal or rob and that always led to one going back (to an institution). That work at *All Electric* actually saved me, and when my mother bought a car for me to take her to work in Sea Point in the mornings, things definitely got easier. All this changed when I approached the owner one day and asked why only ‘white’ Jew boys were getting the opportunity to be apprenticed. I had been working there for long enough already and felt that I deserved a chance. But he never gave me a chance. He just put me down. It’s not like there weren’t facilities available at that time for ‘non-whites’ to become apprenticed. That man just didn’t want to give me a chance. At the time I earned R13 per week, while the qualified ‘white’ electrician earned R65 a week. So I left. I was offered something better or something else happened, but I left after that.⁸³⁶

Gregory spent the next five years as an active member of the Fancy Boys Gang in District Six. In between wild drunken parties and sitting on street corners ‘overseeing their turf’, Gregory and his gangster friends committed many armed robberies. In 1976 an attempt to rob *County Fair Chickens* by Gregory’s gang went

⁸³⁵ OSIA, File H, “*Probation Reports, dated 17/4/1970, 28/12/1970, 20/7/1971 and 12/11/1971*”

⁸³⁶ Interview 8, pp.10-11

horribly awry and led to one of their ‘crew’ being killed. Gregory was arrested and subsequently sentenced to five years imprisonment at Pollsmoor Prison. After serving three-and-a-half years of his term, Gregory was released prematurely at the end of 1979 for ‘good behaviour’.

By that time Gregory had already married. In early 1973 Gregory had met and married a young muslim girl in District Six. Even though he was not interested in converting to Islam at that time, he nonetheless married his wife according to muslim rites.⁸³⁷ But once in jail Gregory met up with a group of muslim prisoners who convinced him to formally convert to Islam. Gregory reflected in 1999 that one afternoon, on his way back from doing (electrical) work on the prison grounds to his sleeping quarters, he had passed a group of muslim prisoners engaged in prayers and the sight was so startling that it moved him to question who he was and what he wanted to do with his life.⁸³⁸

Thereafter Gregory became actively involved in ‘re-converting’ muslims in jail. After Gregory was released from Pollsmoor in 1979, he continued this ‘evangelical’ journey. He perchance met up with a ‘Tabliegh Jamaah’ (muslim group dedicated solely to serving God and preaching the gospel) in Hanover Park on the first day he was released and was so ‘moved’ by their message that he has since been on many trips with the group to Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Madagascar and many parts of Africa. Gregory reflected in 1999 that in the twenty years since his release from Pollsmoor he has been on his holy pilgrimage (Hadj) and visited many parts of the globe in the path of Islam.

When released from Pollsmoor in 1979 Gregory secured work in the building trade via a friend. Thereafter he struggled for many years to secure financial stability. He worked as a plasterer, painter and builder at various times until in the 1980s, when

⁸³⁷ Because Gregory was evading the police he could not marry in court. He thus ‘forced’ an Imam to marry them. He was subsequently circumcised and his name was changed to Anwar.

⁸³⁸ Interview 8, p.13

he had secured enough funds to start a small-business venture with a friend. They would buy run-down and neglected houses, renovate them and then re-sell them. In later years, encouraged by a 'white' estate agent', Gregory 'moved away' from the physical-labour trades to the more lucrative pasttime of selling houses.⁸³⁹ He accumulated a small fortune buying and selling property and at one time owned four homes simultaneously. But after seven years of selling houses privately Gregory was unable to make 'sufficient headway' and left the business in 1997. By that time he had lost most of his 'financial assets'.

In the early 1990's I was a registered and qualified estate agent and had my own business in Woodstock. For 9 years I sold houses...did you know that in my lifetime, I've owned about 16 houses, buying, staying in it and then selling it. But then I went into a bad deal, somebody conned me out of a building, things turned sour and I then had to close down my business. After that I went back to the lady who originally got me into the business, then I moved on to a big estate agency in Bellville and then because things didn't work out, I left selling houses/property altogether...⁸⁴⁰

Presently, Gregory sells cooldrinks that he purchases from a local manufacturer. He has a truck with which he delivers the drinks door-to-door in various neighbourhoods in Elsies River. Being self-employed he balances his economic commitments alongside his many 'spiritual endeavours'.⁸⁴¹

Informant 9: Sedick Edwards (born in August 1935)

Sedick Edwards was found guilty of assault in the Juvenile Court in 1950, but because it was his first offence, his case was converted to a Children's Court enquiry whereupon it was determined that Sedick was 'in need of care'. He was 'committed' to Ottery School of Industries in late 1950.⁸⁴²

⁸³⁹ Anwar noted in 1999 that he was a qualified estate agent and had written (and passed) the estate agent board examination in the late 1980's. See interview 8, p.12. The interviewer confirmed this by telephoning Anwar's previous employer, *De Huizemark Estate Agents* in Cape Town.

⁸⁴⁰ Interview 8, p.12 and p.16

⁸⁴¹ Interview 8, p.26; Anwar belongs to a muslim socially-oriented group (dawah-workgroup) which regularly visits prisons, reformatories etc to inspect conditions and to do missionary works among muslim inmates.

⁸⁴² Sedick noted in 1999 that his number at Ottery School of Industries was File I. When Sedick was transferred to Porter Reformatory in 1956, his file accompanied him to Porter. For this study, Sedick's story was compiled solely from notes made during three interviews with him in 1999.

Sedick's family was typically working class. While they struggled financially, they were not indigent (as is the case with most of the subjects of the other life stories). The middle child of nine siblings, Sedick attended school regularly, passing Std VI at Trafalgar High in 1949. In that year however he stopped attending school because he viewed further education as a waste of time. In an interview with Sedick in 1999 he reflected that as he was by then proficient in reading and writing⁸⁴³ he often played truant once he was in Std VII. When his mother found out about his truancy she insisted that he attend school. Sedick refused. Thereafter he left school in search of employment. His first job at the age of fifteen was at *United Tobacco Company* in Observatory where he worked the nightshift. His eldest brother worked there as quality controller and had secured a job for him.

Sedick left his job at *United Tobacco Company* after a few weeks. Thereafter he found employment with a fruit-and-vegetable hawker for three days every week. He would accompany his employer to the market and then sell the goods door-to-door. He also delivered laundry on two days of the week. By that time, 'being on the street' Sedick had begun to commit small acts of delinquency such as gambling and drinking. These delinquencies were common among adolescents at that time. In 1950 Sedick got into an argument with his hawker employer and in the ensuing scuffle hit his employer and stole his money. Sedick was subsequently found guilty of assault by the Juvenile Court in Cape Town. Because it was his first offence, his case was transferred to the Children's Court. But based on his father's 'evidence' in court Sedick was deemed to be 'in need of care' and 'committed' to Ottery School of Industries where it was believed he would learn 'respect and discipline'⁸⁴⁴.

My boss, he was a man who could really booze man. One Friday night I had to beg him for my wages. He was lekker gesuip (drunk) so he refused to pay me. We argued, so one thing led to another and I grabbed a hammer and hit

⁸⁴³ His 'literacy' was evident in discussions with Sedick. Presently, as a pensioner and with no foreseeable employment, Sedick spends his days in the Cape Town Public Library reading magazines and books. Sedick offered opinions on a wide range of contemporary topics and debates during the researcher's discussions with him.

⁸⁴⁴ Interview 9A, p.3

him on the head. He flopped over so I took my money that I found on him and ran away. When his wife found him she reported me to the cops and they came hunting for me. All I took was my money, man. My old man was fed up with me by then, so he said, 'Stuur hom weg, man' (send him away). In court my mother pleaded with the magistrate that it was my first offence, but my father said, 'hy gaat 'n skollie word as hy by die huis bly' (he's going to become a skollie (thief) if he stays at home), so they sent me to Bonnytoun.⁸⁴⁵

Sedick was supposed to have been held at Bonnytoun Place of Safety in "Q-Town" until arrangements could be made for his transfer to Ottery School of Industries. While at Bonnytoun however, he met two boys who were planning to run away from the institution. After sawing through the bars attached to a toilet window one night, the three boys escaped from Bonnytoun. They couldn't return home as police officers always went there first. The three boys thus lived in the bush. After a few weeks the boys were apprehended and returned to Bonnytoun, from where they were 'removed' to Ottery School of Industries in late 1950.⁸⁴⁶

When we ran away from Bonnytoun, we lived in the bush in Rylands. The bush was quite thick there and there was no way they could find you there. We made a sort of a hut and covered it up. Only you that knew the place could find it. The cops used to come look for us there but could never find us. I think my mother told them where I was because she was worried about me. I had gone to visit her and told her where I was living. We used to go to Athlone during the day, see where we could get hold of money and food. Then we used to go to the hut at night and gamble and eat. We used to really live it up. That time we used to know girls working in shops and cafes who used to come and sleep by us in the bush and bring along refreshments. We all used to sleep on car seats. But one day one of our girl connections squealed on us. She showed the cops where we were and they took us back to Bonnytoun.⁸⁴⁷

Sedick remained at Ottery School of Industries for almost five years thereafter. In mid 1955 Sedick was caught smoking dagga at Ottery. Because of his bad disciplinary record at the institution he was transferred to Porter Reformatory later

⁸⁴⁵ Interview 9A, p.3

⁸⁴⁶ Interview 9A, p.3

⁸⁴⁷ Interview 9A, p.4-5

that year.⁸⁴⁸ Sedick spent nearly two years at Porter before being released from the institution in early 1957. All children committed to state institutions in terms of the Children's Act had to be released from state care soon after they turned twenty-one.

When released from Porter, Sedick returned to his parent's home. By then, his parents had been forced to move to Silvertown in Athlone. Sedick's father worked at *Grimble and Bricks* (in Claremont) as a carpenter and secured employment for Sedick with a German immigrant working at the firm. Sedick thereafter became the 'unofficial' apprentice of the German and learnt how to do intricate skirting techniques. By then, Sedick had met his future wife in Claremont. He started to stay away from work often and eventually lost his employment. Sedick had to move out of his parents' home thereafter because of constant quarrels with his father. By then Sedick was dating Gadija regularly and made arrangements with her father to stay in an outside room at his residence.⁸⁴⁹ When Gadija later became pregnant, Sedick married her and resided at her parents' home.

Later he secured a council home in Bonteheuwel and moved there. He was working at *Airflex* at that time, doing upholstery work. This was the trade that he was taught at Ottery School of Industries. When he lost his employment at *Airflex* in the early 1970s, Sedick found a job in Vredenberg where he worked in an upholstery workshop. He used to sleep in a back room attached to the workshop. His wife would visit him every second weekend or once a month. But after a few years the owner of the workshop emigrated and Sedick was forced to return to the Cape. Sedick was offered the position of continuing to manage the workshop for the new owner, but Sedick's wife refused to move to Vredenberg. Upon returning to the Cape, Sedick found that his wife no longer wanted to live with him. She was earning enough as a dressmaker to live on her own and refused to accept Sedick's

⁸⁴⁸ In terms of triangulation, Lourens Marcus noted in 1999 that Sedick was a pupil at Ottery School of Industries during Lourens' stay at the institution. As one of his prefect duties Lourens had accompanied Sedick when he transferred to Porter Reformatory in 1955. See Interview 2A, p.2

drinking and swearing. Thereafter Sedick survived by drawing unemployment for more than a year. Also, when his wife moved back to her mother's home, Sedick was evicted from his council home. Sedick asserted in 1999 that one of the stipulations of getting a council home at that time was that his wife had to reside with him.⁸⁵⁰

Sedick's is a woeful tale of poverty, unemployment, petty crime and bad luck. In interviews in 1999 Sedick related how he had always tried to 'buck the system' but had never succeeded. For example, Sedick spoke of how he had once participated in a criminal act while at Porter Reformatory (for which he was subsequently imprisoned) so that he could be released from the restrictions of the Children's Act. A fellow pupil had apparently told him that once committed to prison for a criminal act, Porter no longer had jurisdiction over him. He reasoned that six months in jail was better than two years in a reformatory. This turned out to be false. Once he served his six-month sentence in jail he was re-admitted to Porter where he remained for two further years.⁸⁵¹

Presently sixty-five years old, Sedick still does odd jobs for subsistence, whenever he can gain employment. He lives alone, sniffs glue and drinks menthylated spirits often. Sedick reflected in 1999 that to pass the day he often visits public libraries and spends much of his time reading whatever he can find. In the interview in 1999 Sedick offered viewpoints relating to a range of topics. The topics included issues like the meaning of democracy, the responsibility of the national government towards the poor, the lack of spritualism among contemporary youth, and which political party should legitimately rule the Western Cape.

⁸⁴⁹ Sedick presently resides at the same residence where he stayed when he first married in the 1960's. While he presently (for the past five years) lives in a shack that was once used to 'house' chickens, in the 1960's he occupied an outside room at the Thornton home. Interview 9A, p.28

⁸⁵⁰ Interview 9B, p17

⁸⁵¹ Interview 9B, p.15

f) The Socio-Political Context

It is clear that the implementation of child-care policies under apartheid depended on the interaction of an array of social factors. Social conditions and circumstances were certainly diverse and distinct for individual ‘coloured’ families and it is difficult to chart a set of common denominators that led to particular children being institutionalised under apartheid. But the way in which human interaction affected the implementation of social policy under apartheid is clearly visible in the few examples given here of the social contexts that led to the institutionalisation of ‘coloured’ boys under apartheid. On the one hand, the ideas informing various social and political policies during the period under review shaped the way in which child-care legislation was implemented for the various ‘groups’ of children. On the other hand, the various responses of ‘coloured’ parents and their children to their social circumstances interacted in complex ways with child-care legislation.

Once a boy was institutionalised by the Children’s Court however, his future was somewhat ‘guided’ not only by the social institutions that were available for indigent ‘coloured’ boys during the period under review, but also by the various social actors within the institutions themselves. From the language used in official documents about indigent ‘coloured’ boys to the complex and ambiguous ways in which social workers, child-care workers, court and police officials interpreted social care policies, it is abundantly clear that ‘state experts’ and other professionals working ‘on the ground’ with ‘coloured’ indigent boys impacted in crucial ways on the implementation of child-care policies under apartheid. What these institutions were meant to do under apartheid and what they in fact did (rhetoric versus reality), will be addressed in Part Two of this Section (C).

g) The Provision of Children’s Homes for Indigent ‘coloured’ Boys deemed to be ‘in need of care’

An analysis of the available social institutions for ‘coloured’ indigent children in the period 1940 to 1970 reveals that there were very few children’s homes for

‘coloured’ children during this period, and that the Roman Catholic Church provided more than eighty percent of these homes. Much research is still required to show the ways in which this system of child-care services was formulated and how education was provided to those committed to children’s institutions. It is evident that from the late 1940s organised attempts were made by the state to regulate and co-ordinate these services as part of the overall national system of child-care facilities. The greater state intervention in national welfare matters and welfare policy by the Union Department of Social Welfare after the Second World War was not only an acknowledgement of the inadequate and disorganised nature of welfare provision for children until then, but also reflected state attempts to link social welfare policies more firmly to issues of urbanisation and industrialisation.⁸⁵² Also, by that time the available resources and the context in which institutional care was provided primarily determined the provision and quality of education by church-based institutions. For example, whether the child came from an urban or rural setting had direct pertinence to the level of education and financial aid provided to the child.

From the various ‘life histories’ it is clear that many older-than-fourteen boys in ‘coloured’ children’s homes nationally were specifically transferred to the Ottery School of Industries after 1948 to receive trade training. To highlight this phenomenon where ‘coloured’ boys in children’s homes were transferred to Ottery for this reason, reference will be made to the particular experiences of six of the informants consulted for the study. State documents reveal that the six informants were mostly transferred from various state or church children’s homes during the period 1950-1970 for trade training. This training was considered important in

⁸⁵² This was clearly evident in a National Social Welfare Conference held at Wits University in 1944 which focused on the following subjects:

- a) The State and the Health of the Urban Population;
- b) The State and the Urban Worker;
- c) The Social Services and the Urban Population; an
- d) The Responsibilities of Provincial and Local Authorities with regard to welfare provision

It was resolved at the conference to encourage government to assume greater control in matters relating to wages and poverty, social services, and education and health See Union of South

enhancing the various boys' employment opportunities once they were released from state care. It is argued that a combination of complex social circumstances further informed the transfer of the six informants to Ottery School of Industries

During the period 1948-1970 the bulk of the 'coloured' population in South Africa resided in the Western Cape. Yet there were only six children's homes for 'coloured' children in Cape Town in the 1950s.⁸⁵³ This shortage was highlighted by the Theron Commission Report which noted in 1976 that because the (by-then) ten children's homes in Cape Town only accommodated 604 'coloured' children, many 'coloured' children resident in the Western Cape were being sent to children's homes elsewhere in the country. It is significant to note here that while young 'coloured' boys were often sent to children's homes in outlying areas, once they reached the age of fourteen and older they were inevitably transferred to institutions nearer to the Cape. This was done with an eye to re-integrating them back into the 'coloured' community. It was also expected that 'coloured' boys would find employment and reside in the predominantly coloured Western Cape. While a comprehensive survey of the available 'coloured' children's homes during the period under review is not attempted here, a broad understanding of the reasons for the shortage in state institutions for 'coloured' children is required.⁸⁵⁴

Significantly, the Children's Act of 1937 did not provide for the segregation of children's homes in South Africa. But the trend in Cape Town (and the rest of the country) in the first half of the twentieth century was certainly towards racial segregation within voluntary welfare services and state welfare services and

Africa (1946), *South African National Conference on the Post-War Planning of Social Welfare Work*, (Pretoria, Government Printer)

⁸⁵³ Helm, B (1959), *A Cape Town Directory of Social Welfare* (Cape Town)

⁸⁵⁴ In 1975 there were thirty-four 'coloured' children's homes in South Africa. Various Churches administered the thirty-one Homes. The Roman Catholic Church provided almost eighty percent of these Homes. Union of South Africa (1976), *Commission of Inquiry into Matters relating to the Coloured Population Group* (the Theron Commission Report), (Cape Town, Government Printer, para.11.12 and 11.125). Also see Van der Horst, S (ed.) (1976), *The Theron Commission Report: A Summary of the Findings and Recommendations of the Commission of Enquiry into Matters Relating to the Coloured Population Group*, (Johannesburg, South African Institute of Race Relations, 1976, p.80)

institutional care. This meant that no 'non-white' children could be cared for in 'white' institutions.⁸⁵⁵ After the Second World War the lack of funds prevented the establishment of more children's homes in the city. Significantly, the apartheid state in the 1950s determined that 'white' philanthropists should no longer partake in the provision of welfare aid to the 'non-white' population. In a city in which voluntary welfare organisations were dominated by 'white' philanthropists and philanthropic organisations and the bulk of the 'coloured' communities lived in dire poverty, this state endeavour led to a substantial decrease in the provision of welfare aid to indigent 'coloured' families. Later apartheid laws and regulations such as the 1955 Registration of Separate Amenities Ordinance also produced a climate in which very limited funds were available for the provision of welfare relief and the establishment of welfare institutions.⁸⁵⁶ At a time when there was a decline in provision and a significant increase in 'need', the meagre provision of institutional homes for 'non-white' children between 1950-1970 was not surprising. During this period practically all available 'coloured' children's homes were under the control of religious bodies⁸⁵⁷, and that the developing system of state institutional care for 'coloured' children was very much in its infancy.

More importantly however, notwithstanding the lack of institutional homes for 'coloured' children during this period, the attitude shared by both the government and many sections of the 'coloured' community, namely that the best care for children could only be provided within the family, also informed the small number of children's homes that were available.⁸⁵⁸ The provision of care in 'coloured'

⁸⁵⁵ In Cape Town in 1938 only eight percent of welfare organisations in Cape Town restricted themselves to work among the 'non-white' population. See Burman and van der Spuy (1998), p.243. Also see Batson, E (1940), 'The Social Services: Discrimination and Counteraction', *Race Relations* 7, 1940, p21

⁸⁵⁶ Burman and van der Spuy (1998), p.243

⁸⁵⁷ See Republic of South Africa (1976), *Commission of Inquiry into Matters relating to the Coloured Population Group* (the Theron Commission), (Cape Town, Government Printer, para.11.126)

⁸⁵⁸ For example, Burman cites the belief among muslims at the Cape that parents should care for their children. Muslim belief that orphans and neglected/maltreated children needed to be adopted by muslim community members informed their discouragement of the establishment of children's homes. The Christian church also preferred members to provide foster care for children instead of institutionalisation. See Burman and van der Spuy (1998), p.244. This was also evident in a representation by a member of the Cape Malay Association to the Penal Reform Conference in 1947.

children's homes in the period 1950-1970 was expected to be temporary. Formal infrastructures were thus not put into place for the differentiated institutionalisation of children. Thus, when 'coloured' boys in the children's homes system could not be returned to their families, adopted or placed in foster care when they reached the age of fourteen, they were transferred to Ottery School of Industries. The institution represented the only non-penal social institution that provided for boys older than fourteen at the time.

h) Children 'in need of care' and Social Institutions

Depending on the age of the child, when the Children's Court determined that a 'coloured' boy was 'in need of care' and required institutionalisation, it either placed him in a Children's Home or 'committed' him directly to the Ottery School of Industries or the Porter Reformatory. Nationally, when 'coloured' boys 'placed' in Children's Homes by decree of the Children's Court could not be returned to their homes, adopted or placed in foster care when they reached the age of fourteen years old, they were transferred to the Ottery School of Industries.⁸⁵⁹ In this study six of the nine informants were transferred to Ottery School of Industries from various Children's Homes all over South Africa, while three of the informants were 'committed' directly to Ottery by the Children's Court.⁸⁶⁰

N. Hassen argued that parents should be 'bound over' to look after their children under pain of penalty and asserted that 'the real responsibility for committed offences by juveniles rested less with young people than with their parents'. See State Archives (Pretoria), 'Undated letter to Union Department of Education from N. Hassen titled: What are the Causes of Juvenile Delinquency amongst the Malay Youth', *SAB File E14A, Volume 1, ref: 8/6/3, no.10/2/2/3, (1950s?)*

⁸⁵⁹ The Ottery institution was established and funded by the Union Government. Many children's homes and orphanages thus also sought to take advantage of legislation that could provide for some of their children.

⁸⁶⁰ The boys committed *directly* to Ottery School of Industries consisted of two categories. On the one hand, 'delinquents' like Sedick and Gregory were sent to Ottery School of Industries (or Porter Reformatory) for 'correctional' supervision. On the other, 'welfare cases' like Gasant and Moegsien, who were already fifteen years old when deemed 'in need of care' by the court, were sent to Ottery for residential supervision. Welfare officials claimed that Ottery could provide Gasant and Moegsien also with 'life training' and 'prepare' them for the world of work. In many instances magistrates serving in Children's Courts sent boys like Gasant to Ottery for the trade training available there and argued that this would facilitate their overall 'rehabilitation' and their re-integration into society when they turned eighteen years old. See OSIA, files G(i), G(ii) and H. Also see interview 9A, p.3

The six informants noted above were transferred to the Ottery School of Industries from children's homes for a variety of reasons. From their interviews it would seem that the social interaction between the various boys and their care givers significantly influenced their transfer to Ottery. In interviews conducted in 1999 many of the informants claimed that they had either chosen to transfer to Ottery or certain teachers or child-care minders had 'persuaded' them to move there. While it is unclear whether the various 'interventions' by informants were as successful as they claimed, their 'stories' do reflect how the interactions between social actors informed the movements of institutionalised boys. For example, Ashley Golding told of how, after spending nine years at the St Francis Home in Athlone, Cape Town, he was suddenly transferred to Ottery. He was not consulted or given prior notice of such a move.

You know, St Francis Home, that place was very nice, yes, really very nice. That was my family, those people. When I stayed there in the 1950's I attended St. Marks Primary School in Lawrence Road (Athlone) until Std IV. At that time a Mr Doman was both Principal of Sunnyside Primary and Chairman of the Board of St Francis Home. So he organised me to go to Sunnyside Primary for Std V. Because that school only went up to Std V, I then went to Sinton High for Std VI. From there, perhaps they thought I was too big for the Home or they thought I could learn a trade. I'm not sure. I just found myself being transferred from St Francis Home to Ottery.⁸⁶¹

Institutional documents reveal that the Board of St Francis Home decided to transfer Ashley to Ottery School of Industries in 1956 so that he could 'learn a trade'. It is also significant here that Ashley's 'needs' were understood in the context of Cape Town life. In terms of the policies of apartheid, it was generally understood that 'coloured' working class boys would remain in Cape Town, especially given the labour preference policies adopted there. In this regard, the Board of St Francis Home asserted that Ashley needed to be equipped with a means to survive in Cape Town if he was going to remain in the city upon being released from state care. The Board believed that the trade training provided at Ottery School of Industries would help Ashley 'fend for himself'. Trade training was the sole reason provided in

official documents for Ashley's transfer.⁸⁶² In this regard, it is unclear just what was meant when the Board members referred to trade training. It may well be that 'trade training' was a catch-all term to justify the transfer of difficult boys, boys with special needs (scholastically retarded), or the transfer of 'normal' boys at times when children's homes were overcrowded.

Lourens Marcus spoke of his keenness⁸⁶³ to attend Ottery School of Industries when told of the possibility of such a move. In 1949 the Principal of Ottery School of Industries had visited Lawrentia State Institute in Kraaifontein, Cape Town and suggested to officials there that Ottery could provide the 'disadvantaged' indigent 'coloured' boys at the Home with trade training that would facilitate their integration into the labour market when they were released from state care. At that time this type of training for 'coloured' indigent children was not freely available. Lourens reflected in 1999 that when the first Lawrentia boys that were previously transferred to Ottery came to visit in 1950 he had been struck by the adult way in which they handled themselves.

All the Ottery boys were allowed to freely carry cigarettes on their person and constantly spoke of the wonderful trades they were learning at Ottery. That was why I wanted to go there, so that I also could be treated as an adult.⁸⁶⁴

When attempts made by social workers in 1949 to return Lourens to his mother's home revealed that not only had social conditions not improved in the Marcus household but that the family continued to 'freely mix' with 'africans' in Johannesburg, officials⁸⁶⁵ transferred Lourens to the Ottery School of Industries.

⁸⁶¹ Interview 1, p.2

⁸⁶² OSIA, file A, 'Movement of pupil to another institution dated 17/1/1956'

⁸⁶³ Lourens noted though that Principal Bester had emphasised to them that once they were transferred to Ottery, they could not leave the institution until they were 'released' in terms of the Children's Act when they turned eighteen. The children that resided at Lawrentia could be released whenever school officials deemed it opportune to return them to their families. Interview 2a, pp.3-4.

⁸⁶⁴ Interview 2b, pp.2 and 5. See Willis, P (1977), *Learning to Labour*, (Farnborough: Saxon House, Teakfield) and Brown, P (1987), *Schooling Ordinary Kids: Inequality, Unemployment and the New Vocationalism*, (London, Tavistock Publications, pp.2-5) for a discussion of the various ways in which working class kids perceived and responded to their experiences at school.

⁸⁶⁵ OSIA, file B, 'Social Worker Report dated 24/11/1949'

Children's Home officials asserted that Lourens would benefit at Ottery from the "moral and spiritual upliftment of trade training, that would provide him with employment later in life."⁸⁶⁶

Jerome Moses reflected in 1999 that he had approached the authorities at the RC Mission Station in 1964 and requested that he be transferred to Ottery School of Industries. With two brothers already at Ottery, Jerome wanted to be close to his family members and suggested to the children's home officials that he would also benefit from the trade training that his brothers had received at the institution. He was willing to transfer to a 'correctional institution' to be with his brothers. Jerome reflected in 1999 that he did not regard being transferred to Ottery as punishment because he "was for the first time in a long time close to family members who could look after me."⁸⁶⁷ In any case, the authorities at the RC Mission Station were only 'swayed' to transfer Jerome to Ottery upon receiving 'good reports' of Jerome's brothers' progress there. Social workers had reported that Jerome's brothers' experiences at Ottery had matured them and provided them with 'marketable trades' that "would facilitate their entry into the job market upon release."⁸⁶⁸

Frank Adams had also resolved to be sent to Ottery when told that the Holy Cross Orphanage that was situated in Parow was to be closed at the end of 1963 and that he was to be transferred to a children's home in the Eastern Cape.

At that time Parow was declared a 'white' area, which meant that we had to leave. The Holy Cross Church could stay but the home itself had to move. They started building another Home, the Holy Trinity Orphanage, in Elsies River, but because they didn't have much money, the home was much smaller. My granny told me that if they didn't have enough place at the new institution, they were going to transfer me to the Eastern Cape. Anyways, there was this old orphanage-boy who came to visit during his holidays and told us about Ottery. He said 'why don't we come to Ottery to learn a trade.

⁸⁶⁶ OSIA, 'Notule van Raadsvergaderinge: 10/11/1948'. Also OSIA, file B, 'Notification in connection with movement of pupil dated 30/1/1950'

⁸⁶⁷ Interview 3, p.10

⁸⁶⁸ OSIA, file C(ii), 'After-Care Report, Department of Welfare and Pensions dated 24/11/1966'

I didn't want to leave Cape Town (I wanted to be near my granny also), so I (and three others) volunteered to be sent to Ottery School of Industries.⁸⁶⁹

Walter Petersen was transferred to Ottery School of Industries because he was sixteen years old and had only passed Std III. The Principal of NG Sending Herrberg in Pofadder, Northern Cape, asserted in 1964 that Walter could no longer attend 'normal school' and needed an 'alternative placement' because the Home did not possess facilities for the 'scholastically retarded child'.⁸⁷⁰ The Home had initially sought to return Walter to his family in Colesberg but found that during the four years that Walter had resided at Pofadder, his family had since moved. Walter was thereafter transferred to Ottery School of Industries. Walter noted in 1999 that he had 'chosen' to go to Ottery, even though he had been given the option of returning to the Coetzee home by children's home officials. Apparently his 'coloured' housefather at the children's home (whom he idolised and respected) had encouraged him to move to Ottery 'to make something of himself'.

Daar by Pofadder was 'n Meneer Tromp soos 'n vader vir my. Hy het vir my gese ek moet Ottery toe. Ek glo nie Meneer Tromp of sy vrou het probeer om my te mislead nie. Ek dink nie hulle was ooit by daai plek nie en het nie geweet wat daar aangaan nie. Dit was ook seker nie hulle decision nie. Maar ek dink altyd wat Mr Tromp vir my gese het op daai dag, "Walter, jy moet na Ottery toe gaan, jy moet 'n ambag leer om eendag na jousef te kan kyk". *That was the turning point in my life. (There at Pofadder I developed a father-son relationship with a Mr Tromp. He was the one that advised me to go to Ottery. I don't believe that Mr Tromp or his wife deliberately tried to mislead me. I don't think they were ever at Ottery and thus did not know what happened there. It was also probably not their decision anyway. But I always think of what Mr Tromp told me that day, "Walter you have to go to Ottery, you must learn a trade so that you can look after yourself one day". That was the turning point in my life.)*⁸⁷¹

Pieter Botha had previously attended St Joseph's Trade School in Aliwal-North. He had been sent there at the age of fourteen when welfare officials could not locate his domestic-employee mother. When he arrived at the institution in 1963 he was only

⁸⁶⁹ Interview 4a, p.1 and interview 4b, p.5

⁸⁷⁰ OSIA, file E, 'Report on pupil and application to transfer child to another institution dated 10/9/1964'

⁸⁷¹ Interview 8, p.5

fourteen years old and thus the youngest pupil. The St Josephs Trade Training Centre at that time was not confined to children and accommodated a range of individuals hoping to learn a trade. Pieter thus resided in dormitories with adults.

At St Joseph's I was the only child. And they wanted to treat me like one. Only, when it came to the work, I had to perform like an adult. I couldn't take it and used to fight with those who tried to push me around.⁸⁷²

Because Pieter was not adjusting to the 'conditions' at the trade school,⁸⁷³ he was returned to St Mary's Orphanage in December 1964. By then both his behaviour and his schooling progress had deteriorated. Officials at the St Mary's Orphanage were concerned that Pieter was by then too old for their institution and transferred him to Ottery School of Industries.

Pieter was a silent and well-behaved boy before he went to St Joseph's. But he became careless and negligent in his work and study and was returned to our Home. Here at the orphanage Pieter is too old for our institution and after having been at an adult institution where he probably learnt all sorts of 'adult ways' can be a danger to our boys. The pupil requires trade training but also needs to learn discipline and respect. A transfer to Ottery School of Industries would be to the best of his education.⁸⁷⁴

Transfer to Ottery School of Industries was thus significantly informed by a variety of social actors operating in different contexts. This indicates clear disparities between the rhetoric and reality of child-care policy making at that time.

⁸⁷² Interview 8, pp.11 and 4

⁸⁷³ In correspondence between St Joseph's Trade School and St Mary's Orphanage, it was suggested that Pieter may have been sodomised while at the trade school. Later on this 'fear' was listed as one of the reasons why Pieter was transferred to Ottery. Nuns at St Mary's 'feared' that Pieter may enact things that he had experienced at St Joseph's. While not questioned about this in the interview in 1999, Pieter did note in the interview that he had spent many nights at St Joseph's Trade School looking for ways to hurt those adults who victimised him. True or untrue, the incident is only mentioned here to highlight the influence of alternative reasons that also influenced Pieter's transfer from St Mary's Orphanage. See OSIA, file F, '*Report on Progress, St Joseph's Trade School*' and '*Report on pupil and application for transfer to another institution in terms of the Children's Act of 1960 dated 19/1/1965*'. Also see interview 6, pp.11-15

⁸⁷⁴ OSIA, file F, '*Report on pupil and application for transfer to another institution in terms of the Children's Act of 1960 dated 19/1/1965*'

i) The ‘Correctional’ Institution, Ottery School of Industries

Ottery School of Industries was established in Cape Town in 1948 specifically for indigent and ‘maladjusted’ ‘coloured’ boys. Straddling the jurisdictions of the Union (national) Departments of Justice, Education and Welfare,⁸⁷⁵ the institution was intended for ‘coloured’ children ‘in need of care’ deemed by magistrates in Children’s Courts nationally to be improperly looked after in their local communities and homes.⁸⁷⁶ The establishment of the state institution was motivated both by the need to provide welfare ‘nets’ for ‘coloured’ boys who were being abused, neglected and maltreated in their homes, and as part of a judicial response to increasing rates of juvenile crime and ‘social maladjustment’. Ottery School of Industries was thus provided to serve as a residential solution for the welfare needs of indigent ‘coloured’ boys, as well as a ‘correctional facility’.⁸⁷⁷

In the context of its role as a ‘correctional’ facility, institutionalisation at Ottery School of Industries was regarded as the means to ‘normalise’ indigent ‘coloured’ boys perceived to be ‘prone to criminal activity’. By providing a rigid disciplinary environment (much like that provided in prisons, reformatories and in the military) alongside trade training and education, practitioners at Ottery School of Industries resolved to ‘rehabilitate’ and ‘normalise’ young ‘coloured’ boys to the ‘world of work’ under apartheid. This method of ‘normalising’ and regulating children living on the margins of ‘normal’ society was an intrinsic part of modernist international

⁸⁷⁵ Schools of Industries and Reformatories fell under the jurisdiction of the Union Education Department. The national treasury provided the funds while the various national departments supplied the ‘expertise’ to administer the institutions.

⁸⁷⁶ During this period residential child-care facilities like Ottery School of Industries were not only provided for all ‘coloured’ boys in South Africa, but also for ‘coloured’ children living in the former Rhodesia and South West Africa.

⁸⁷⁷ While it is unclear where the term School of Industries is derived from, it may have reflected the ‘modernist’ aspirations and mindset of the official mind during that period evoked by the secondary industrial revolution of the 1940s. It is a historical fact though that the term ‘School of Industries’ replaced the term Industrial Schools in Government records (when referring to Children’s Act institutions) in the 1940s. Schools of Industries thereafter referred to all established and envisaged government industrial schools which catered for ‘in need of care’ children as dictated by the Children’s Act. See Union of South Africa, *Reports of the Union Education Department for period 1940-1950*, (Pretoria, Government Printer). Also see earlier chapter on the provision of technical education in South Africa in the twentieth century.

thinking during that period. It was asserted in many local and international debates at the time that by producing a particular reality in a closed environment for indigent, maladjusted and maltreated children, where they could be taught the 'domain' and 'rituals of truth' of their future lives, modern society could 'save' indigent children from marginalised and criminal lives. Locally, by constituting its subjects in particular ways, Ottery School of Industries was expected to perform a crucial role in regulating delinquency in the broader 'coloured' communities.

As a welfare facility, Ottery School of Industries served as a retreat for those boys adversely affected by the dire poverty prevalent among the majority of the 'coloured' population. Established in 1948 as part of the increased attention to social welfare processes (both locally and internationally) in the period after the Second World War, the institution was envisaged as a residential alternative for over-fourteen-year-old 'coloured' boys who previously would have been sent to penal facilities like Porter Reformatory and Pollsmoor Prison in Cape Town, or indentured to (placed under the supervision of) 'white' farmers and employers. As a residential facility, Ottery School of Industries was also meant to provide indigent or parentless 'coloured' boys access to education and trade training which would facilitate their prospects for employment when they turned eighteen years old. Alternatively, the boys were provided with training that was intended to serve as 'tools of self-support' when they later found themselves unemployed or out of work (and thus 'tempted' to engage in criminal activity as a result of such a condition). In teaching indigent 'coloured' boys the value and habits of work, committal to Ottery School of Industries was intended to provide them with a particular vision of society in which certain power relations were upheld. Part Two of this Section will focus on the expressed aims of the Ottery institution and the way in which the services provided there interacted with particular social realities.

3. Part Two: Institutionalisation at the Ottery School of Industries from 1948

Introduction

There were particular reasons why the life histories of the nine informants were individually addressed in the first part of the section. In Part One it was necessary to not only show the varying social contexts which led to the committal of indigent and ‘maladjusted’ ‘coloured’ boys to ‘correctional’ facilities in the period 1948-1970, but also to engage with the predominant discourses which informed the provision of institutions for the various ‘coloured boys. Through the provision of individual accounts of the life stories of nine Ottery ‘old-boys’ it was asserted that various policy discourses intersected with contextual and individual social circumstances to determine who was institutionalised at that time. While the nine individual life stories referred to in the first part of the chapter may not have been representative of all the social contexts which informed the institutionalisation of ‘coloured’ boys during the period under review, the life stories did provide a visual backdrop of the boys’ lives and gave some sense of the dire poverty and complex social conditions encountered by much of the ‘coloured’ community. The *real life accounts* of the individual boys provided a particular window from which to view what it was like to live under apartheid as an indigent ‘coloured’ child. Part One also highlighted how the various policy discourses (in the period under review) with regard to the indigent child objectified and reduced the lives of the various indigent and ‘maladjusted’ ‘coloured’ boys (and their social contexts) to *one* narrative of ‘potential criminals’.

Part Two of this chapter focuses on the ‘correctional’ institution at Ottery and the ways in which the development of the institution after 1948 shaped the lives of the ‘coloured’ boys that were sent there. It is clear that the early years of the evolution of the Ottery institution significantly shaped the provision of professional and institutional services at the institution. Furthermore, it is argued that the development of the institution after 1948 was crucially shaped by issues associated

with the physical location of the institution, the colour of the pupils and the levels of available technical training, academic schooling and welfare provision for 'coloured' children in South Africa at that time. In this regard, the 'stories' of the nine informants about their experiences at Ottery reflect the complex interplay between the development of the institution and its services and the reality of living at the Ottery institution.

Part Two is framed around two key arguments. The first key assertion of Part Two is that the institutional and professional services provided at Ottery were used to plausibly 'plot' (if only discursively) the parameters of the future lives of individual indigent 'coloured' boys. The Ottery School of Industries was established in 1948 to provide for the 'coloured' 'in need of care' boy in four essential ways, namely:

- a) Residential accommodation and supervision which included the provision of sleeping facilities, washing facilities, daily meals, laundry and medical care;
- b) Academic schooling of the same content and 'quality' as that provided at other (non-institutional) 'coloured' primary and high schools;
- c) 'Suitable' trade training that would enable the 'coloured' boys to find employment upon release from state care;
- d) The psychological supervision of individual boys by trained personnel who monitored both their adjustment and progress at the institution.⁸⁷⁸

In this regard it is significant that the establishment of the 'correctional' facility at Ottery emerged in relation to a specific social context. It is necessary to re-emphasise here that at that time the social and educational provisions for 'coloured' children in the Union were not only very limited, but were determined by a

⁸⁷⁸ OSIA, *TBK KUS Volume 124 file 79/2/3/2*, 'Annual Report of 1966'; Also, it is significant that a state report in 1951 outlined the aims of institutional care (not only schools of industries) in the following ways:

- a) The complete rehabilitation of the child in all the phases of his life so that he can in every respect develop into a useful, well-balanced citizen. To achieve this
- b) The child must be fed and clothed so that he can physically develop into a strong and healthy person;
- c) The child must be given the opportunity to develop his intellectual ability and practical aptitude to enable him to earn a living;
- d) He should be assisted in his social adjustment and where necessary aided to overcome character defects and behaviour problems.

See Union of South Africa (1951), *Report of the Continuation Committee of the National Conference on Children's Institutions*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.8)

particular race dynamic.⁸⁷⁹ By 1948 schooling was not compulsory for ‘coloured’ children⁸⁸⁰ and technical education provision (other than at penal institutions) was only available to those ‘coloured’ children who could afford to pay for trade training.⁸⁸¹ Also, until the establishment of Ottery School of Industries in 1948 Porter Reformatory and the Mountain View Hostel in Retreat, Cape Town⁸⁸² were the only other state institutions that provided residential facilities for older-than-fourteen ‘in need of care’ ‘coloured’ boys.⁸⁸³ Until the establishment of Ottery School of Industries in 1948, older ‘coloured’ boys were mostly ‘referred’ to Porter and Mountain View based on the availability of (limited) psychological, trade training and educational services facilities at those institutions at that time. In that

⁸⁷⁹ From 1948 previous segregatory policies were formalised/legalised and more-rigidly enforced. While there was clearly some degree of continuity in the policies towards ‘coloured’ children from 1938 to 1968, it is significant that the provision of schools of industries for ‘coloured’ boys from 1948 was a new development in welfare and education policy.

⁸⁸⁰ The *Coloured Education Ordinance (Cape) of 1945* provided for the bringing into force of compulsory education for ‘coloured’ children. It is unclear when this ordinance began to be enforced. See Hellmann E (ed) (1949), *Handbook on Race Relations in South Africa*, (Cape Town, Oxford University Press for SAIRR, p.359). Also see Chapter 3, “*Colouredness and industrial schools*”

⁸⁸¹ In 1948 there were no state trade schools for ‘coloured’ pupils in the Union. The Cape Technical College conducted continuation classes where vocational instruction was given to ‘coloured’ apprentices. In Johannesburg the Technical College provided academic and commercial subjects to ‘coloured’ pupils at Newtown. The Technical College in Durban also offered commercial and dressmaking subjects for ‘coloured’ pupils. The only other vocational education was provided at state-aided technical schools conducted by the Roman Catholic Church for ‘coloured’ boys and girls. See Hellmann (1949), pp.360-1. Also see chapter 5(b), “*Technical and vocational education in South Africa with special focus on the 1940s*”, p.29

⁸⁸² Mountain View Hostel was a state hostel that was used to retain, educate, maintain and train juvenile ‘coloured’ male delinquents in any industry, craft or agricultural enterprise. The hostel could accommodate about 60 boys. Within the existing literature it is unclear under which department the institution was administered (most likely the Department of Social Welfare from 1938) in the 1930s and 1940s. Noting that boys were sent there from all over the Union, it was probably not a provincial enterprise. The history of reformatory-type hostels which endeavoured to find work and oversee older-than-eighteen-year-old boys is very vague and largely unwritten. In relation to the functions of the Mountain View Hostel in Retreat, Cape Town, Wagner describes the institution as having “its own school with two qualified teachers. The boys also received training in grass and cane furniture manufacture, gardening, wordwork, dairying, housework and handyman work such as painting, plastering and cement block-making”. See Wagner, OJM (1938), *Social Work in Cape Town Part II: Directory of Social Welfare Organisations*, (Cape Town, Maskew Miller Ltd, pp.78-79

⁸⁸³ Hellmann (1949) noted that while the Children’s Act of 1937 provided a wide choice of treatment for indigent and ‘in need of care’ non-European children, “this only existed on paper for the majority of non-European children since the necessary institutions were not available. Many non-European children, whose removal from their homes are desirable for their own sakes, had to be sent to a reformatory or (work) hostels because other types of institutions were simply not available”. See Hellmann (1949), pp.100-101

period the provision of psychological counselling services and child guidance clinic facilities outside state ‘correctional’ institutions were strictly limited to ‘white’ children.⁸⁸⁴

From 1948 the provision of compulsory academic education, trade training, psychological counselling and residential accommodation was ‘readily available’ to indigent ‘coloured’ boys at Ottery School of Industries. The subsequent committal of large numbers of both indigent and ‘maladjusted’ ‘coloured’ boys to Ottery School of Industries was thereafter determined by the way in which factors linked to both the political and social conditions of urban Cape Town in the 1950s as well as by particular assumptions about ‘coloured’ youth and their position in society under apartheid, informed the discourse of ‘coloured’ institutional provision.

The second key assertion of Part Two is that the provision of professional and institutional facilities at the Ottery institution after 1948 led to large numbers of non-delinquent ‘coloured’ boys being committed to the ‘correctional’ institution in the period 1948-1970. Before 1948 many of these ‘services’ were available to indigent ‘coloured’ boys only at penal institutions (reformatories, hostels and prisons). It is argued that many practitioners in welfare, educational and correctional institutions in the period after 1948 responded pragmatically to the provision of compulsory schooling and technical training at the Ottery School of Industries. Whether they acted in the best interests of their ‘subjects’ by sending indigent ‘coloured’ boys to a ‘correctional’ facility and the extent to which their decisions were ‘theoretically’ or ‘morally’ guided by the dominant crime/disorder/poverty

⁸⁸⁴ See Hay, A (1990), *The Cape Town Child Guidance Clinic 1935-1971: an Historical Analysis*, (unpublished MA thesis in Psychology, University of Cape Town, pp.45-8). Hay noted that the UCT child guidance clinic in Rondebosch, Cape Town, in the period 1935-1971 only provided for ‘white’ maladjusted youth. Moreover, she asserted that the ‘experts’ primarily used the clinic to assess ‘problem white children’ and their families, and to suggest intervention programmes. Hay observed that “any behavioural aberration, be it difficult behaviour patterns or just unstable traits such as nervousness, excessive emotionality or lying, was reconceived in that period in terms of ‘maladjustment’.” In that period the needs of urban ‘white’ children (who exhibited signs of ‘maladjusted’ behaviour) were primarily addressed at counselling facilities provided in community settings. Only those ‘white’ children who supposedly could not be ‘redeemed’ were sent to schools of industries and reformatories for ‘rehabilitation’.

discourse of that period are questions that are open to debate. It is clear however that the responses by education, welfare and institutional practitioners to the needs of indigent and ‘maladjusted’ ‘coloured’ boys were very varied and ambiguous, and contributed in significant ways to the blurring of the boundaries between welfare, education and ‘correctional’ provision in the period under review.

In Part Two the explanation for the development of the Ottery School of Industries is firstly situated within the ethos of policies regulating all Schools of Industries in South Africa at that time. It is then shown how the issues of ‘colouredness’, urban location, the perceived links between crime and social control⁸⁸⁵, and other associated problems, informed the way in which the various institutional services provided at Ottery were conceptualised from 1948. Furthermore, in South Africa after 1948, previous segregatory policies such as the job colour bar and the race-specific Apprenticeship Act were enforced far more rigidly in the social and economic arena. This had significant implications for the provision of the institutional services at Ottery from 1948. The passing of the Group Areas Act in the 1950s also impacted in significant ways on the development of the institution. In this regard, it should be noted that the Ottery institution was located on the border of ‘white’ and ‘coloured’ Group Areas. It is argued that the choice of location for the institution was linked to the fact that Ottery School of Industries was the first institution in South Africa with a ‘white’ and ‘coloured’ staff complement that resided on the institutional premises. ‘White’ staff members would simply not reside on the institution’s premises if it were not bordered by Ottery. While this residential issue was mostly addressed as a ‘practical dilemma’ at the time, it provided ‘coloured’ boys with a particular ‘reality’ and vision of life under apartheid after 1948.

⁸⁸⁵ Le Roux, for example, suggested in 1951 that the issue of ‘coloured’ delinquency and poverty was firmly linked to the ‘skollie-problem’ that was supposedly prevalent in Cape Town at that time. See Le Roux, WG (1951), *Die Kleurling-Jeugbende in Kaapstad*, (Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch, unpublished D.Phil thesis, p.277)

Moreover, it is significant that the make-up of the institutional staff at Ottery closely resembled work relationships outside the ‘correctional’ institution. Ottery School of Industries was the first state social institution for children that had a ‘mixed’ staff. The principal, administrative staff, professional staff which included three psychologists and a social worker, the schooling head, the trade instructors, head nurse and housefathers were all ‘white’, while the academic teaching staff,⁸⁸⁶ assistant trade instructors, kitchen and laundry staff, child-care minders and the assistant-nurse were ‘coloured’.⁸⁸⁷ In this regard the ‘coloured’ staff complement of school-teachers, assistant trade instructors, child-care supervisors, hospital nurses, and those who fed them and oversaw the washing of the boys’ clothes, were also marginalised at Ottery.⁸⁸⁸ They were treated in much the same way as the boys committed to Ottery; according to their ‘colour’. In fact, it can be argued that they provided the boys with a daily visual example of the complex interplay between social position and race (‘colouredness’) under apartheid.

This should indicate that there were significant differences between the rhetoric and reality of the implementation of social welfare and educational policy under apartheid with regard to the provision of a School of Industries for ‘coloured’ boys. Policy makers and practitioners in the fields of welfare and education were most likely driven by a ‘humanist’ rhetoric which sought to improve the life chances of

⁸⁸⁶ The fact that the academic teaching staff complement was all ‘coloured’ requires some analysis. It is argued that this development was linked to other issues such as the historical period under discussion, the nature and philosophy of educational provision for ‘coloured’ children at that time, and issues of middle class ‘coloured’ political identity (where it was believed that the ‘coloured’ teachers would serve as examples and sources of aspiration for the boys). See Adhikari, M (1992), “Let the Children Speak”

⁸⁸⁷ Du Plessis, WKH (1958), *Die Nywerheidskool as Onderwys- en Opvoedingsinrigting in Suid-Afrika*, (Potchefstroom: University of Potchefstroom, unpublished Doctor of Education thesis, pp.295-296)

⁸⁸⁸ There is a further aspect to this debate. In 1957 the principal of the institution replaced the two ‘african’ security guards with ‘coloured’ guards because “we couldn’t continue to have Africans having some measure of control over Coloured boys. In any case, the boys simply did not respect them and we couldn’t have that now, could we?”. He noted that “omdat hulle nie in die slaapsale toegelaat kan word nie indien hulle aangerand word deur die seuns, is hulle geheel en al nie bedoel vir hierdie werk nie. In elk geval, hulle is naturelle en dus is daar ‘n gebrek van intelligensie en algemeen onbetroubaarheid. (*They are unsuitable for the job simply because they can’t allow them to enter the hostels in case they get assaulted by the boys. In any case, the fact that they are natives means that they are untrustworthy and lack intelligence*)”. Information partly obtained in an

those whom they sought to serve, and the provision of trade training and an increase in access to education were regarded as fundamental developments in improving the lives of children during the period under review. Nonetheless, in the period after the Second World War the discourses around race, social control in urban areas, welfare and education provision, and slum clearance determined that a particular type of trade training, education and residential facility was provided for 'coloured' boys.⁸⁸⁹

a) The Provision of the first School Of Industries for 'Coloured' Boys

From 1910 both the Union Government and voluntary organisations (which included churches) constructed a complex array of institutions in South Africa. These institutions were designed to house, care for or reform a variety of people seen as constituting different types of social problems: asylums, prisons, reformatories, industrial schools, hostels, compounds, hospitals, schools and residential institutions for children.⁸⁹⁰ Each set of institutions had its own particular character and history, shaped by class, race, gender and contextual issues. However, all sets of institutions shared certain common features (especially after 1920 with the increased influence of the language of science, medicine, treatment, and pathological investigation). In this regard, all institutions

interview with FA Bester in July 1998. Also see CA, 'Inspeksieverslae, 1957-1969', TBK CRN Vol.A15, S1/4/3, ref: 108/25/1/2

⁸⁸⁹ From interviews with the nine informants consulted in the study it is also clear that individual institutional and social realities informed the way in which welfare and educational policies were implemented at that time.

⁸⁹⁰ Foucault (1977), Scull (1979), Ignatieff (1978) and Mathiesen (1980) have all argued that prisons, asylums, workhouses and other social institutions have since the seventeenth century been consistently used to serve, confine and discipline the poor, the unemployed, the unemployable and the socially disadvantaged in various ways. They argue that to understand the role of institutions in various societies, institutionalisation needs to be addressed as a set of practices, agencies and sanctions in which notions of moral salvation, criminality and poverty were constantly being moulded and remoulded in relation to contextual conditions. See Chisholm's doctoral thesis on reformatories in South Africa and Shula Marks' recent work on mental hospitals. Chisholm (1989), pp.29-34, pp.121-123 and p.167, and Marks, S (1999), 'Every facility that modern science and enlightened humanity have devised: Race and Progress in a colonial hospital, Valkenberg Mental Asylum, Cape Colony, 1894-1910', in Melling, J and Forsythe, W (eds), *Insanity, Institutions and Society: New Research in the Social History of Madness*, (London, Routledge, pp. 268-91). The article by Shula Marks is part of a larger work in progress on health and health care in three hospital institutions in South Africa: Valkenberg, St Monica's and on the Rand Mines.

- a) Invoked the need to segregate the ‘problem’ and to subject ‘it’ to an institutional regime separated from the rest of society;
- b) Laid claim to a potential for reform, whereby they remade the ‘problem’ into a person capable of leading a ‘good’ and ‘useful’ life;
- c) Laid claim to a scientifically based understanding of the ‘problem’ and the principles of reform;
- d) Came to be regarded as ‘productive’ facilities that worked with ‘flawed’ human material in accordance with scientific principles, and through such work created people ‘useful’ to society.

Common to all the sets of institutions was the belief that performing ‘useful labour’ was the principal agency of ‘reform’, particularly with regard to institutions that housed ‘wayward’ adults and children.⁸⁹¹

The provision of institutional care in South Africa for children deemed to be ‘in need of care’ has however a much more complex background and ‘racial’ history. In Section A it was asserted that the Union Education Department had relied on the ‘rich’ experience it had gained in providing and administering 14 industrial schools⁸⁹² for ‘white’ ‘in need of care’ children in the period 1909 to 1948, when it set about establishing the Ottery facility. It was also asserted that institutional responses towards children deemed to be ‘in need of care’ was framed within a particular discourse by 1948. This discourse had emerged in a period when a firm relationship between the state and the child had been developed. In this relationship between state and child, the state had increasingly acknowledged its responsibility to protect and provide for all children in South Africa.

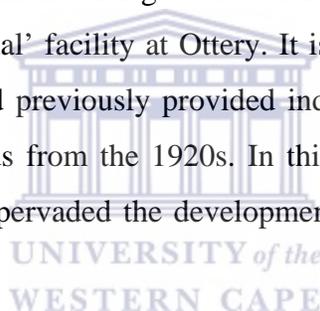
In a country beset by a complex relationship between race and class, this emphasis on child-care was bound up with debates about the particular material, social and political circumstances of the young children who needed state aid. It is argued that these contextual conditions and dilemmas and the debates around them determined

⁸⁹¹ In relation to the British experience see Clarke, J (1993) (ed), *A Crisis in Care? Challenges to Social Work*, (London, Sage Publications and the Open University, pp.5-8)

⁸⁹² As noted before, the term industrial schools (promulgated under the Children’s Act) was supplanted in official texts in the 1940s by the term school of industries. In providing a brief history of these institutions from the 1890s, the term industrial schools will be used for the period until 1944. For an

that children from various racially designated groups and social statuses encountered very different experiences as wards of the state. As was noted in Part One, the way in which various children came to experience state welfare tended to mark their lives in very concrete ways.

It is argued here that the establishment of the Ottery institution needs to be understood as the provision of a number of facilities for ‘coloured’ boys in one location. From 1948 the Union Education Department resolved to simultaneously address the perceived moral/spiritual salvation, work training and social upliftment needs of ‘coloured’ indigent boys at the Ottery facility. Given that there was a severe shortage in the number of welfare and educational facilities for ‘coloured’ children in that period, the Union Education Department sought to address these concerns, as well as the demands for greater social welfare provision for ‘coloured’ children, at the ‘correctional’ facility at Ottery. It is significant here that the Union Education Department had previously provided industrial schools for ‘poor white’ children with similar needs from the 1920s. In this regard, it is necessary then to understand the ethos that pervaded the development of industrial schools from the turn of the century.



b) The Ethos underlying the Development of Industrial Schools in South Africa

When industrial schools were first established in South Africa during the 1890s, they were envisaged as a means to alleviate ‘white’ poverty, particularly in the rural areas. By 1917 industrial schools had come to serve as shelters and disciplined environments for ‘white’ indigent children after being removed from mostly urban slums where it was believed they were corrupted by ‘racial mixing’ with ‘non-whites’. The institutions were intended “to nurture indigent and anti-social ‘white’ children physically, morally, intellectually and vocationally, and to equip them with ‘skills’ that would enable them to fulfil intelligently and honourably their duties as

understanding of the differences between industrial schools and trade schools, see Section B,

citizens as well as builders of comfortable and happy homes”.⁸⁹³ Institutionalisation at industrial schools for ‘white’ indigent children at that time was regarded as a mechanism for ‘character building’ to re-orientate them to the norms of ‘white’ society and to save them from the taint of ‘impure associations’.⁸⁹⁴

In this regard, as noted by the Secretary for Education in 1924, the social rehabilitation of ‘white’ indigent children was only deemed possible if they were ‘taught to respect the nobility of labour’.

Whilst industrial schools train boys and girls for particular trades and crafts, the primary object of the training is character formation. It is only natural that the unfavourable circumstances in which the children spent their lives before admission should have affected their characters adversely, and the schools should therefore consider it their first duty to rectify any discrepancies of conduct that are the result of previous neglect and lack of control.⁸⁹⁵

Bound up in the ethos of salvation was the belief that trade training at industrial schools was the ‘medicine’ for both impoverishment and behaviour not deemed suitable for ‘white’ children. Training for work was conceptualised here as an intrinsic aspect of social reclamation and rehabilitation, which had significant political and religious resonance at that time. Salvation and rehabilitation also clearly entailed providing ‘white’ children with ‘employable trades’⁸⁹⁶ that would allow them to take their rightful place in society and the labour market.⁸⁹⁷

The object of industrial training is to produce not only the skilled practical workman who knows the technique of the trade, but also the cultured

Chapter 4.

⁸⁹³ Union of South Africa (1918), *Annual Report of the Under Secretary for Education for 1917 - hereafter G68ED (EDUC)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.72)

⁸⁹⁴ While the salvation of ‘poor white’ children was deemed to lie in removing the ‘white’ child from further contact with ‘other races’, it will later be shown that the salvation of ‘coloured’ children was deemed to lie in their removal from their ‘own community’, which was considered inherently ‘tainted’.

⁸⁹⁵ Union of South Africa (1925), *Annual Report of the Department of Education for the years 1924-1925*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.454).

⁸⁹⁶ Grobler, JA (1941), *Juvenile Delinquency in South Africa*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished doctoral dissertation, p.180)

⁸⁹⁷ Chisholm (1989), p.52

workman, especially since most of the children in industrial schools come from surroundings where work is frequently not held in high esteem.⁸⁹⁸

Industrial Schools and the role of education

The provision of industrial schools from 1917 was also informed by envisaged links between crime and poverty. By that time the belief in ‘child saving’, which was dominated by religious notions of reclamation and salvation, had merged with attempts to understand adolescence as a stage of growth. In this regard child welfare facilities were also envisaged as institutions to control juvenile delinquency. With a focus on science and medicine, of treatment and the investigation of social and individual pathology, the ‘expert knowledges’ (especially IQ testing) of an emerging class of professional social workers, psychiatrists and educationalists working in welfare and other social institutions increasingly came to play a significant role in the shaping of industrial school policy. The increased influence of ‘scientific intervention’ was clearly evident in the Report of the Secretary of Education in 1938.

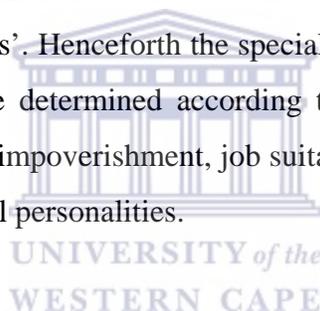
If we take into account the fact that the great majority of pupils who are being cared for in industrial schools have come from very poor home and social surroundings, then it is evident that the main purpose of these institutions ought to aim at the full spiritual rehabilitation of the pupils by means of character building and personal upliftment. More and more, however, these institutions must be organised and categorised around the identification of the weaknesses and needs of each individual pupil (my emphasis). Things like accommodation, nourishment and clothing, scholastic knowledge with which to earn a certificate, trade efficiency that would later ensure a life of independence, are without doubt very necessary. They have little value however as long as the child is not helped to find a spiritual balance in life and to adjust himself in society.⁸⁹⁹

From 1917, over a period of twenty to thirty years, industrial schools developed structured academic, spiritual and technical education programmes at their facilities, as well as substantial residential and psychological support services.

⁸⁹⁸ Union of South Africa (1925), *Annual Report of the Department of Education for the years 1924-1925*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.448)

⁸⁹⁹ Union of South Africa (1938), *Report of the Union Education Department for the year 1937-UG68ED (EDUC)*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.29)

In Section B (Chapter Three) it was argued that by the 1940s socially defined deviant behaviour had been transformed into a ‘medical’ problem, which meant that delinquency was labelled as a ‘sickness’ which required ‘isolation’ and ‘regulation’. By this time developments in psychological and IQ tests had also ‘legitimised’ the increased intervention of the state into the *social lives of children and their families*. On the one hand this psychological approach served to concretise the link between poverty and delinquency, with the firm objective of governing the family through the guidance of its inner relationships and responsibilities. On the other hand, this approach also served to classify and individualise pupils at industrial schools according to their personal needs and those of their ‘communities’. It is argued that this approach to delinquency and poverty put into place mechanisms that from 1948 allowed for considerable differentiation between ‘correctional’ institutions provided for the various ‘race groups’. Henceforth the special needs of children at the various schools of industries were determined according to a number of criteria such as ‘race’, IQ levels, levels of impoverishment, job suitability in a differentiated market, and the nature of individual personalities.



Nonetheless, it is notable here that alongside the ‘medicalisation’ of delinquency and poverty, the provision of education and trade training was consistently conceived of as a form of moral training⁹⁰⁰ from the 1920s. Boys were subjected to a series of activities and tests that supposedly taught them discipline, conformity, pride and patience. These were qualities deemed by educational officials “as sadly lacking in undisciplined and wayward youth.”⁹⁰¹ Educative tools were regarded as key elements in “finding a spiritual balance in life and effecting the social rehabilitation” of the child. The Secretary of Education noted in 1952 “while

⁹⁰⁰ This was not a phenomenon particular to South Africa. Head of the Penal Reform League of South Africa, Reverend HP Junod, noted in 1951 that work training was also the main emphasis in borstals in Britain. He also noted that juvenile offenders in Britain spent 6-8 weeks at allocation centres where psychologists checked (a) their educational and social aptitudes, (b) their IQ levels, (c) their vocational aptitudes, and (d) for any ‘abnormalities’. See University of Cape Town Archives (UCTAr), BC627 M4.3, OD Wollheim Papers, ‘Penal Reform League of South Africa Newsletter, No.17, April 1951’

schooling and trade training had a practical objective, it was still the most powerful means of re-education and character building and were important in helping pupils to adjust themselves in society and building up normal sentiments”.⁹⁰²

Crucially, in terms of the differential facilities that were provided for the various ‘race’ groups under apartheid, by the late 1940s the trade training and schooling ‘needs’ of ‘white’ children were being provided at a variety of different institutions. By this time there existed schools of industries, technical high schools, housecraft schools, and commercial and agricultural schools that provided trade training for ‘white’ children.⁹⁰³ It is also significant that from 1948 ‘white’ schools of industries provided differentiated programmes for ‘white’ indigent children, as determined by the IQ levels of the relevant children. From 1948 schools of industries for ‘white’ children were for the first time separated into those of (a) normal intelligence, (b) subnormal intelligence, and (c) behaviour deviates.⁹⁰⁴ This system of differentiation was only ever used in relation to pupils at ‘white’ schools of industries.⁹⁰⁵

It can be argued that the provision of differentiated state and voluntary institutions for ‘white’ children from the 1930s contributed substantially to the wider elaboration and establishment of a South African society on a racial basis. Many of the prevailing ideas and policy positions both of the Union Government and voluntary organisations (including the churches) on issues of crime, race, indigency,

⁹⁰¹ G68ED (EDUC), (1938), p.37 and p.34

⁹⁰² *UG18/1952*, p.14

⁹⁰³ There were 14 schools of industries (as compared to 7 in 1934) for ‘white’ ‘in need of care’ children by 1949. See Union of South Africa (1952), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1949- UG18/1952*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, pp.10-16). For a summary of the development of reformatories and schools of industries in South Africa, see Grobler, JA (1938), *Juvenile Delinquency in South Africa*, (Cape Town, University of Cape Town: unpublished doctoral dissertation, p.121)

⁹⁰⁴ Union of South Africa (1952), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1949- UG18/1952*, (Pretoria, Government Printer). Also see Education Reports for the years 1944 to 1950.

⁹⁰⁵ With regard to ‘coloured’ pupils, the only differentiation (in the period after 1948) employed was between those of rural or urban origin. This was because, based on IQ testing, the majority of ‘coloured’ ‘in need of care’ children were deemed to be ‘behaviour deviates’. See Section B (Part Two): ‘The medicalisation of the industrial child’

uncontrollability, sexuality and degeneracy were moulded and reshaped during this period to inform the formulation of subsequent state policy for children.

c) 'Coloured' Poverty, Social Needs and Institutionalisation

The provision of a school of industries for 'coloured' boys in the Cape Peninsula from 1948 was significantly informed by the ethos of the industrial school movement and the role that industrial schools had come to play in South Africa by that time. The appeal of providing moral, character and work training in one large institution was particularly strong in this period.⁹⁰⁶ In previous sections it was shown that by the 1940s the ideology of reclamation and rehabilitation of the 'problem family', especially with regard to the 'coloured' population, had come to exist alongside notions of 'criminal tendencies' and 'mental deficiency'. As noted, the attempts to govern the 'problem coloured family' through the guidance of its inner relationships and responsibilities were not only firmly shaped by links between poverty and delinquency, but also by hereditarian theories of crime.⁹⁰⁷

By identifying 'racial' inferiority as the basis of 'non-white' criminality, this school of thought from 1948 sought to show the 'deeper organic' differences between the 'races'. 'Non-white' criminality was therefore seen as a symptom of the lack of an organic community and social solidarity, and supposedly reflected an inherent 'social pathology' among 'non-whites'.⁹⁰⁸

⁹⁰⁶ After the Second World War this 'appeal' also informed the establishment of Cadet Camps, military training camps for young youths and scout associations. The study of these kinds of camps is a neglected area of investigation in South Africa.

⁹⁰⁷ Anthony Platt noted in 1977 that child saving in the US was motivated mostly by a middle class desire to control the dangerous and perishing classes, and halting the drain on the state imposed by the poor. For a discussion also of the US experience, see Platt, A (1969), *The Child Savers* – second edition, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1977). Also see Van Krieken, R (1986), 'Social Theory and Child Welfare: Beyond Social Control', *Theory and Society, Volume 15, No.3, pp.401-429*

⁹⁰⁸ It was asserted in the Annual Report of the Union Education Department in 1955 that the majority (55%) of 'white' children sent to schools of industries were admitted on the grounds of indigence, while 60% of 'coloured' boys admitted to schools of industries were sent there because of their uncontrollability. These statistics were derived from the classifications imparted by practitioners 'on

The large-scale migration of rural ‘coloureds’ (especially youths) to non-rural areas from the late 1930s caused much consternation and concern among members of the municipalities of urban centres.⁹⁰⁹ At a time when the level of ‘coloured’ unemployment and impoverishment, especially at the Cape, was seen to be steadily increasing, municipalities in the Western Cape generally addressed problems of urbanisation in particular ways, which were informed by ‘knowledge-bases’ that had by then been ‘constructed’. Both Cape ‘whites’ and many ‘middle class’ ‘coloureds’ were greatly concerned at that time about the impending threat to social order that urbanisation and the effects thereof, posed.⁹¹⁰

In this period there was a clear link between the ‘negative’ influences of the ‘coloured’ home, the high rate of juvenile delinquency/ skolly activity in the ‘coloured’ community and the ‘won’t-work’ nature of their demeanour.⁹¹¹

d) The emergence of a particular type of welfare provision for ‘coloured’ children

It was argued earlier in the chapter that the responses to alleged increases in ‘coloured’ delinquency as well as the (alleged) ‘unruliness prevalent in their home-life’ clearly emerged alongside endeavours to secure welfare and educational initiatives for poor ‘coloured’ people from the 1940s.⁹¹² It is maintained here that

the ground’. It would seem that because the term ‘uncontrollable’ was open-ended, just about any ‘coloured’ boy ‘in need of care’ could be so classified. See Union of South Africa (1955), *Annual Report of the Department of Education, Arts and Science for the years 1953 and 1954 - UG60/1955*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.19)

⁹⁰⁹ South African Institute of Race Relations (1938) *Revised Findings and Recommendations of the Bantu Juvenile Delinquency Conference of 1938*, (Johannesburg, SAIRR, p.15, point no.34)

⁹¹⁰ William Beinart has noted that the Second World War had “stimulated internal industrial growth in an economy that was already diversifying rapidly”, and that the deep concern for ‘african’ “poverty, crime, delinquency and the effects of migrant labour” at that time “saw government commissions being readily supplemented by Social and Economic Planning Councils”. See Beinart, W (1994), *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 124-134). Also see Section A, pp.31-41

⁹¹¹ Gross, FA (1944), p.50

⁹¹² Wilcocks Commission (1938), p.22. An Union Education Department memo, titled ‘Die Rehabilitasie van die Skollie element’ noted in 1955 that “legislation and institutions (be it work colonies or camps) was needed to oblige each ‘skollie’ to learn how to work, much like that provided in Belgium, Sweden and West Germany. Skollies had to be taught that labour was the sole basis of their futures”. (*Soos in Belgie, Swede en Duitsland, genoeg voorsiening moet gemaak word (of in werkskolonies of kampe) om vir elke skollie te verplig om te leer werk. Hulle moet geleer word*

the ‘educative’ and welfarist opportunities that institutions like schools of industries could provide, informed the establishment of the institution at Ottery in 1948.

The first principal of Ottery School of Industries, Dr. FA Bester, noted in November 1948 that the institution was established to provide services that would teach poor ‘coloured’ children not only the importance of work⁹¹³ but also how to work. These twin ‘concerns’ were deemed important in developing poor ‘coloured’ children into ‘fulfilled’ and ‘respectable’ members of their communities. Bester observed that:

Verwaarlose en sorgbehoewende kinders is ‘n byproduk van enige demokratiese maatskappy. Van alle faktore wat meewerk om sodanige kinders te produseer is die sosiaal-ekonomiese waarskynlik die sterkste...(nietemin) diegene wat op simpatieke wyse kennis gemaak het met sekere buurtes in Distrik Ses, Woodstock, Windermere en elders is nie verbaas omdat so baie kinders in Porter is nie, hulle is verbaas dat so baie nog buite Porter is. (*Neglected and abused children are by-products of all democracies. The most important factor that contributes to the presence of these children is the social-economic one. (Nonetheless) those sympathisers who deal daily with the communities of District Six, Woodstock, Windermere, etc. are not surprised that so many boys are in Porter. Rather, they are surprised that so many are not.*)⁹¹⁴

This formal statement of intent demonstrated that the ‘coloured’ boys committed to Ottery did not necessarily have to be ‘problem’ children. If their home and social circumstances were deleterious to their upbringing, they could quite easily be ‘sent’ to a school of industries. In this period policy makers focused specifically on the environmental importance of a stable ‘coloured’ home life. They pointed out the supposedly coterminous influences of the ‘coloured’ home⁹¹⁵ which was said to

dat arbeid die enigste manier is waarop sy toekoms bestaan.) See CA, TBK KUS Vol.2690, Ref:8/6/3, “Welsynsinrigtings vir Kinders: Jeugmisdaad”, article dated 8/8/1955

⁹¹³ The Secretary of Education noted in a memo in 1955 that the ‘coloured’ indigent mostly suffered from an aversion to work. He asserted that they needed to be taught to prefer work over idleness (“hulle moet die gewoonte van werk verkies bo ledigheid”). See CA, TBK KUS, Vol.2690, Ref:8/6/3, ‘Welsynsinrigtings vir Kleurling kinders’, memo dated 4/9/1955

⁹¹⁴ CA, TBK KUS, Vol. 124, Ref: 79/2/3/2, Part 1, ‘Prinsipaal-verslae: 1948-1954, report dated 10/11/1948’

⁹¹⁵ Much as the Wilcocks Commission had asserted in 1938, the Theron Commission noted in 1976 that the ‘coloured lower-classes’ in the 1970s lived in a “state of chronic poverty and were characterised by a high degree of deviant behaviour, lack of motivation and discipline, lack of planning for the future, lack of participation in community organisations, and poor and unstable family life”. See Van der Horst, ST (ed), *The Theron Commission Report: A Summary of the Findings and*

emanate from the extremely unfavourable circumstances to which large sections of the 'coloured' population was subjected,⁹¹⁶ and suggested that policy be adapted to address the 'special' social problems of the 'coloured' population⁹¹⁷.

In this regard, the provision of the Ottery institution was envisaged to impact on the lives of 'coloured' boys ('committed' there by the Children's Court) in particular ways. It is asserted that the ways in which 'coloured' boys then experienced life at Ottery was informed by the services provided at the institution and the context in which the institution had developed.

e) The Development of the Ottery School of Industries after 1948

In the period 1948 to 1970 'coloured' boys were sent to the 'correctional' facility at Ottery for a variety of reasons (access to trade training, special needs provision, 'correctional' supervision or welfare residential care). Once at the institution, the structure of the 'correctional' facility, as well as the services provided there, shaped the lives of the individual boys in particular ways. Given that both the structure of the Ottery institution and its services developed over a period of time, it is not possible to show how the various institutional contexts specifically informed the lives of individual 'coloured' boys.⁹¹⁸ In this regard, the discussion will focus on particular aspects of the development of the institution (in very limited ways) and suggest that at various times these factors influenced the lives of individual 'coloured' boys in very different ways. The development of the Ottery School of Industries from 1948 will be discussed in three ways. The first approach will focus on the structure of the Ottery institution and the ways in which various aspects of its

Recommendations of the Commission of Enquiry into matters relating to the Coloured Population Group, (Johannesburg, SAIRR, 1976, pp.122-3)

⁹¹⁶ The principal of the Ottery School of Industries, FA Bester, asserted in 1954 that three quarters of the 400 boys at Ottery came from single parent homes or from foster care. He also noted that social pathological tendencies were found to be evident in 67% of the parents of the 'coloured' boys at Ottery. See CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.124, Ref: 79/2/3/2, 'Jaarverslag oor die Werksaamhede van die Ottery Nywerheidsskool in 1954', pp.2-4.)

⁹¹⁷ See Section B, Part One.

⁹¹⁸ It can in fact be argued that the Ottery institution can only be referred to a school of industries from 1956.

structure may have constituted the lives of ‘coloured’ boys sent to the institution from 1948. The second will address the institutional services provided at Ottery, and question the ways in which these services, and the ideas that informed their provision, framed the lives of ‘coloured’ boys at the institution, as well as after their release therefrom. The third approach will discuss the ‘correctional’ aspects of the institution and analyse the ways in which life at a ‘correctional’ facility shaped the experiences of individual boys at Ottery.



i) Approach 1: A discussion of the various aspects of the physical structure of the Ottery School of Industries: Location and Staff

It is significant that particular principles of enclosure and surveillance generally governed the architecture of all schools of industries in South Africa, although the physical aspects of the buildings, and forms of surveillance, differed between institutions. While most South African schools of industries were established on the grounds of military camps, the envisaged size of the institution, and the period in which it was provided, normally determined its building needs.

For example, the Standerton Industrial School provided by 1929 “a self-contained wood and iron house with accommodation for 30 girls, an old army hut containing 35 beds for pupils, 2 staff rooms, and eight smaller ‘cottages’ each able to accommodate 15 pupils. The institution also had housing for a further 25 pupils and also 4 staff rooms”. The buildings were previously used as military barracks during the South African War of 1899-1902. Emmasdale Industrial School, on the other hand, contained six separate ‘cottage blocks’, each housing about 45 boys.⁹¹⁹

Chisholm has noted that the forms of surveillance at these institutions were largely based on the system developed at L’Ecole Agricole, Mettray, in France during the nineteenth century, which became a popular model for many nineteenth-century American reform schools.⁹²⁰ The founders of the Agricultural Colony at Mettray were apparently concerned to replicate the spirit of family life in its structure and organisation. The ‘cottage system’ encouraged by Mettray sought to disperse surveillance of the ‘inmates’ over different units, each allowing for their greater personal supervision and the simulation of the organisation of the patriarchal family. The term ‘cottages’ was essentially a euphemism for ‘separate and distinct’ dormitories, which were scattered around the camp and locally (at each cottage) supervised. Chisholm argues that the development of industrial schools in South

⁹¹⁹ Chisholm (1989), p.210

⁹²⁰ Chisholm (1989), p.210

Africa seemed to parallel that of the Agricultural Colony in France. In South Africa, however, the military origins of many of the buildings suggested that there was more of the army than the rural family about industrial schools⁹²¹. From their inception, the physical as well as symbolic relationship with the prison, the compound and the army barracks undoubtedly marked industrial schools in particular ways. Industrial schools in South Africa were also characterised by the methods of enclosure, discipline, surveillance, and the general sense of poverty and shabbiness that pervaded prisons, reformatories, compounds and army barracks in South Africa.⁹²² In the case of the Ottery School of Industries, the structure of the institution is understood as including both (a) its location, and (b) its staff.

a) The location of the Ottery institution

The discussion of the location of the institution includes both an analysis of the physical buildings and grounds of the facility as well as of the area in which it was established. With regard to the grounds, there were numerous difficulties encountered in using and reconstituting the buildings and physical environments provided for the establishment of a school of industries on the Ottery camp. At the same time, the area in which the institution was located provided the facility with particular difficulties and dilemmas in providing residential and professional services for 'coloured' boys.

The Ottery buildings and camp

The decision to convert the Ottery Ack-Ack military camp⁹²³ in Cape Town (end of 1947) into a school of industries⁹²⁴ necessitated the grand-scale conversion of the

⁹²¹ Chisholm (1989), p.211

⁹²² Chisholm (1989), p.211

⁹²³ After the Second World War many military camps were made available by the Department of Defence for conversion into schools of industries. See correspondence in May 1945 between the Secretaries of Finance, Public Works, Land, and Education, who agreed that military camps not used by the Department of Defence would be utilised for institutions attached to the Departments of Education and Social Welfare; CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol. 125, Ref:79/2/11, article dated 11/9/1951, "Memorie oor die oornome van Militere Kampe van die Departement van Verdediging vir die stigting van Departemente inrigtings".

⁹²⁴ Besides Ottery, a military camp at Lenz was earmarked for a 'native' school of industries, and one in Pietermaritzburg for 'indians'. From 1946 three more 'white' schools of industries were established

dilapidated camp and its poorly maintained buildings. In this regard, the Public Works Department was commissioned in 1947 to renovate, repaint and initiate the erection of additional buildings on the Ottery grounds. However, given the wide range of services and requirements that needed to be attended to, and the limited funds available to do so, the efforts of the Public Works Department were slow and uneven.⁹²⁵

Initially, in the period 1947 to June 1948, the Public Works Department was able to use the labour of the ex-volunteer soldiers-turned-students attached to the Centre for Technical Training (COTT), and resident on the camp at that time. Before its closure in June 1948, the depot of the Centre for Technical Training used the southern section of the Ottery camp to test the IQ and trade proficiencies of 'coloured' ex-soldiers. Thereafter, the institution had to depend solely on the Public Works Department to bring about the much-needed renovation of the camp. The installation of electricity at the institution, as well as the building of storm-water drains to offset the flooding of the grounds at times of rainfall, indicate the extent of the required 'repair'. This impeded the growth of the institution from 1948.

There were also many other factors that informed the initial slow growth of the institution. Firstly, a common practice that had previously been utilised in the establishment of reformatories and other 'white' schools of industries was the use of the labour of the children (residing at the institution) to renovate the premises.⁹²⁶

on previous military camps. This 'boom' in the establishment of schools of industries for 'all races' was directly associated with factors relating to the Second World War, as well as to the growing worldwide belief in 'scientific intervention' via institutionalisation. Acknowledged American scholars, the Gluecks noted in 1952 that:

we can derive comfort from the fact that in delinquency we are dealing not with predestination but with destination and probably *destination* can often be modified by *intelligent early intervention*. The great social need is to evolve, through experimentation, more *efficient* methods of analysing and *remaking the human personality* (my emphases).

See Glueck, S and Glueck, ET (1952), *500 Criminal Careers*, (California, p.316)

⁹²⁵ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:G2/4, 'Geboue: Omskepping, 1948-1950'

⁹²⁶ This is a pattern that was common to mission school education from the 19th century. Chisholm has also noted that when the Kingwilliamstown Industrial School was established in 1925, the first thing that Principal WD Marais did was to use the boys and the teachers to build the school.

Factors such as the scale of the renovation at the Ottery camp, the small and frail size of the ‘committed’ ‘Ottery boys’, and the limited number of boys, militated however against the *initial* use of the labour of the ‘Ottery boys’. State policy also dictated that ‘casual workers’ (civilian) could not be employed to renovate or work in any way on ‘state camps’ at that time. This was probably linked to the issue of job reservation.⁹²⁷

Die beleid wat die Staat so konsekwent met die stigting van nywerheidskole gevolg het, naamlik om van ou beskikbare geboue gebruik te maak., ongeag hulle ligging of doeltreffendheid, het die nywerheidskool by Ottery voor ernstige probleme gestel. Die geboue is oorspronklik vir ‘n ander doel as ‘n opvoedkundige opgerig. Die geboue het ook lank leeg gestaan en het in ‘n toestand van totale verwaarloosing verval. Die personeel moes dus later met ernstiger probleme deal wat gespruit het uit die ligging van die skool en sy gebouesamestelling (*In the establishment of new industrial schools, the decision by the State to use old available buildings, irrespective of their location or suitability, presented the Ottery institution later with serious difficulties. The buildings were originally meant for purposes other than educational. Also, the buildings had stood empty for quite a while and were hopelessly neglected.*)⁹²⁸

Secondly, it was initially unclear what role the institution would play in the lives of ‘coloured’ boys *not deemed* to be ‘in need of care’. This influenced the discussions of the facilities that were being constituted at the institution at that time. The Principal of the institution noted in 1950 that the facilities at Ottery should also provide for ‘coloured’ children that were not deemed ‘in need of care’.

Die visserye will manne he maar dit moet goeie manne wees. Dit mag nou wel nodig word om jong mans wat uit hul eie vrye wil vir hierdie soort werk kwalifiseer, hier toelaat. Dit sal beteken dat ons in die nabye toekoms Kinderwet-kindere sowel as nie-Kinderwet-kindere hier sal he. Dit is duidelik dat so ‘n ontwikkeling goeie sowel as slegte gevolge kan he en ons

They built drains, made bins, put up gutters and inserted the plumbing system. The different trade sections were used to build, plaster, paint and make cupboards. The Boys even levelled the rugby fields.

WD Marais later became the Principal of both the Constantia Reformatory and Porter Reformatory. See Chisholm (1989), pp.212-213

⁹²⁷ It was argued that ‘white’ workers shouldn’t be seen by the ‘coloured’ boys to be providing ‘casual labour’. At the same time, it was felt that using ‘coloured’ casual labour, besides being a violation of job reservation regulations, would expose the boys to ‘unfavourable’ contact and influences. See CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:G2/2, ‘Geboue: Kleinere Werke’, letter from Bester to Secretary of Education dated 17/6/1949.

⁹²⁸ Du Plessis (1958), p.291

moet versigtig en sorgsaam die proses hanteer (*The fishing industry requires men, but they must be good men. It might well become necessary then to allow young men to attend the institution who wish to (voluntarily) qualify for such work. This might mean that we will have in the near future Children's Act boys as well non-Children's Act boys at the institution. Clearly, such a development could have good and bad consequences and we will have to carefully and critically monitor the process*).⁹²⁹

Thirdly, when the camp was allocated to the Union Education Department in 1947 there were already a number of workshops, classrooms, 'a hospital', a hall, administration offices, a store and limited sleeping quarters on the grounds of the camp. In subsequently bringing about renovations the Education Department was required to provide some idea of the number of boys that it would accommodate, and the nature of the facilities that it would provide for 'coloured' boys. The Secretary of Education noted in 1947 that the Education Department sought to provide for about 200 boys, and that this roll was expected to grow to 500 within three years.⁹³⁰

Dit is die bedoeling om die skool te open met 'n kwota van 200 leerlinge wat oor 'n tydperk van drie jaar sal aanwas tot 500. Benewens die leerlinge sal ook die grootste gedeelte van die personeel by die inrigting gehuisves word. Daar bestaan klaar werkswinkels, klaskamers, 'n hospitaalgebou wat onder andere gebruik kan word vir teringlyers, 'n saal, kantore, en stoorgeboue asmede die nodige slaapvertrekke (*It is the goal of the institution to open with a quota of just 200 boys, which over a period of three years will grow to 500. Because of the type of students, a large proportion of the staff will reside on the grounds. Presently, there are already workshops, classrooms, a hospital building which can be used for TB patients among other things, a hall, offices, storerooms as well as the necessary hostels*).⁹³¹

As Principal Bester noted in 1950, there was much confusion about the facilities that were to be provided for 'coloured' boys at Ottery. On the one hand, it was envisaged that the 'coloured' boys would be provided with the same type and level of training historically provided at 'white' schools of industries. On the other hand, it was

⁹²⁹ OSIA, Ref:108/28/3, "Notule van RaadsVergaderinge, 1948-1974", Minutes of Meeting of Board of Ottery dated 29/11/1950.

⁹³⁰ By 1950 there were only 180 'coloured' boys at Ottery. For various reasons the institution only accommodated 500 boys by 1954-5. See Du Plessis (1958), p.290

⁹³¹ CA, TBK KUS, Vol. 125, Ref:79/2/11, 'Part 1', letter dated 8/2/1947 from Secretary of Education to Secretary of Public Works.

asserted that ‘coloured’ boys should be provided with trade training that would secure work traditionally performed by ‘coloured’ workers. This ambiguity was clearly evident in the 1952 Report of the District Education Inspector, Mr TD Roussouw. The Inspector Report also highlighted the tension between individual perceptions and goals at that time, and wider policy frameworks.

Met die inspeksie van die Nywerheidskool vir Kleulungseuns kom die vraag dadelik op, of die vakopleiding hier bloot moet dien as a rehabilitasie middel en of dit die inleiding is tot vakmanstatus van die leerlinge. Ek is van mening dat die opleiding so deeglik moontlik moet wees en tot ‘n groot mate moet ooreenstem met opleiding aan ons blanke nywerheidskole. Maar die skool spits hom ook tereg toe om die ambagte wat die Kleurlinge toegang het soos die bou ambagte, skoenmakery, kleremakery, stoffeerwerk en visserbootmasjieniste te beklemtoon (*In my inspection of the Ottery School of Industries I had to ask if the trade training was simply seen as a means of rehabilitation or whether the aim was to teach the boys to become artisans. I am of the opinion that the training must be as thorough as possible and that it must to a fair degree correspond to that provided at ‘white’ schools of industries. At the same time, the Ottery institution correctly focuses only on the trades such as building, shoemaking, tailoring, upholstery work and boat mechanics. These are trades in which ‘coloureds’ can find employment.*)⁹³²

Lastly, the nature and structure of the previous military camp determined the way in which the residential aspects of the intervention programme were addressed. Bester asserted in 1950 that the way in which the camp was structured thenceforth determined that those who supervised the ‘coloured’ boys ‘committed’ to the facility were not solely responsible for their institutional care. Instead of a housefather being assigned to a particular hostel where he was responsible for every aspect of his charges’ residential stay at the institution (sleeping, washing, eating, laundry and ironing), at Ottery individual housefathers performed duties of a more general nature. Thus, there were dormitory housefathers, mess-hall housefathers, and housefathers whose essential task was to ensure that each child received his incoming post promptly. There were those who were required to ensure that the school terrain was adequately protected from vandalism and theft, and others that supervised the assembly parades and weekend activities. This departure from

⁹³² CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/19/14 Part One, ‘*Inspeksieverslae, 1951-1958*’, report dated 12 March 1952, see also Central Archives (Pretoria), Ref:E14/108/22, ‘*Inspeksieverslae*’

previous procedures adopted by other ('white') schools of industries was directly associated with the large camp at Ottery, its scattered buildings, the large number of boys⁹³³ that were expected to be sent to the institution, and the expected 'criminal personalities' of the indigent 'coloured' boys. Bester noted in 1954 that

die feit dat hierdie skool in die geboue van 'n eertydse militere kamp tot stand gekom het, het in meer as een opsig kenmerkende beslag aan die skoolorganisasie gegee. Dit bring mee dat hier van die gewone koshuis wat 'n eenheid met 'n eie huislike atmosfeer uitmaak, geen sprake kan wees nie (*The mere fact that the institution was established in the buildings of an earlier military camp has had a significant influence on the organisation of the facility. There is no possibility here of developing a hostel-like environment where a homely atmosphere can be fostered*).⁹³⁴

Where other schools of industries used a cottage system to engender a home-from-home environment, the separate barracks at Ottery were clustered into three groups, and classified according to a particular type of child.⁹³⁵ Each barrack provided beds for about 25 boys. The first group consisted of ten barracks, and was called the Alpha hostel. New boys were to be accommodated in these dormitories until they were properly classified. The second dormitory group, Beta, consisted of six barracks, and the third dormitory group, Gamma, three. Each group of dormitories had their own housefathers who supervised the boys' sleeping and washroom

⁹³³ This phenomenon was not limited to the Ottery institution. The Queenstown School of Industries for 'white' boys was established on a military camp in Queenstown in January 1946. 'White' boys from other schools of industries were subsequently transferred thereto. This was in line with the system of classification that was being adopted at 'white' schools of industries at that time. Queenstown was envisaged for 'white' 'in need of care' boys classified as 'normal'. In 1946 the number of boys at the facility was limited to 300. While it was expected that the enrolment would rise to 500 to 600 boys, by 1956 the number of boys at Queenstown remained 'fixed' at about 300. See Union of South Africa (1948), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for the years 1946 to 1947 - UG41/1948*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.17). Also see Union of South Africa (1956), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1955—UG20/1956*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.32)

⁹³⁴ CA, *TBK KUS Vol. 124, Ref:79/2/3/2*, "Annual Report of Ottery School of Industries, 1954", p.41. See also a report in 1964 in which Bester asserted that the geography of the camp, with its available buildings, had determined the status quo of the institution beforehand ("die geografie van die kamp met sy bestaande geboue het die status quo vooraf bepaal"). See CA, *TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:7/33/10/D10, Prinsipaalverslae, 1960-1964*, Principal Report of 1964, p.1

⁹³⁵ Children were classified according to their age (to prevent bullying), the initial reason for their committal (to separate neglected, abused or orphaned children from the uncontrollable, maladjusted ones), and the length of time they had previously spent at institutions (to separate institutionalised from non-institutional children). By 1960 this policy was no longer practiced. See CA, *TBK KUS, Vol.126, Ref:79/2/29, Part 1, 'Jaarverslae, 1957 to 1959*', Principal Report of 1959, p.111

arrangements. Meals, washing and ironing were however provided centrally in the school kitchen and laundry. In an interview with FA Bester in 1996, he reflected that the poor facilities that were originally encountered at Ottery ensured that everybody had to eat in the central mess-hall.

The military camp had also provided a huge kitchen and eating hall that basically ensured that all meals were consequently taken together. It was in fact because of this type of activity that I then decided to divide the child-care workers or housefathers and mothers not according to a particular hostel but rather according to a particular task. For example, I had positions like a mess-hall-father, a laundry-room-father, and a postal-service-father.⁹³⁶

Furthermore, from 1949 the Ottery camp was divided into two parts, one for the 'coloured inhabitants' and the other for the 'white' staff and their families. This informed the way in which the residential structure of the institution was constituted. Also, because the appointment of a 'coloured' staff was a 'new' initiative by the Union Education Department, it was asserted that the principal needed to supervise them as much as he did the 'coloured' boys.

The area in which the institution was located

The Union Education Department decided to locate the first school of industries for 'coloured' boys in Ottery, Cape Town both for practical and symbolic reasons. Education officials claimed in that period that the institution for the 'coloured' indigent, neglected and orphaned needed to be in Cape Town simply because the majority of the 'coloured' population resided in this locality. Union Government officials asserted that the facility had to be close to the 'coloured' community in order to encourage community participation and responsibility. This presented particular dilemmas and contradictions. Firstly, institutions of this nature were almost always located in isolated environments. In this regard, the Union Education Department was concerned not to locate the institution too close to neighbourhoods deemed to be 'undesirable' as this would undermine their intervention programmes. Du Plessis observed in 1958 that

⁹³⁶ See Interview with FA Bester at his home in Pinelands, Cape Town on the 20 May 1996

Die sosiale ligging van die skool vorm die kernprobleem, want dit grens aan swak kleurlingbuurts, onhigieniese, morsige plakkersdorpe, waar bedrywig met dagga gesmokkel word en sjebeens floreer (*The main problem is the social location of the school, which borders on weak neighbourhoods which are unhygienic and are filthy shanty-towns. Shebeens flourish here and there is much drug peddling.*)⁹³⁷

Secondly, the Union Education Department had originally sought to locate the institution on military bases either in George or Upper Westlake, Cape Town. When ‘white’ community members in the immediate vicinities of the George and Westlake military camps voiced their disapproval of having large ‘coloured’ penal-like institutions in their immediate environment, the Union Education Department opted to establish the institution at Ottery. Even then, it did so only after much deliberation.

Why the Union Education Department established the institution there after official assessments⁹³⁸ had indicated in 1946 that the physical locality at Ottery was not only unsuitable for residential habitation, but also badly located,⁹³⁹ is not easily understood. It could well be that the choice of the Ottery area for the first school of industries for ‘coloured’ boys was based on a number of variables. These could have been related to the particular experiments that the Department wanted to put into place at the Ottery institution at that time.

In this regard, Principal Bester acknowledged in 1948 that institutions of this nature were normally situated quite apart from the communities whom it ‘served’ in order to reduce recidivism and to foster a ‘healthy’ environment for the neglected child far

⁹³⁷ Du Plessis, WKH (1958), *Die Nywerheidskool as Onderwys- en Opvoedsinrigting in Suid Afrika*, (Potchefstroom: Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoer Onderwys, pp.290-291)

⁹³⁸ A Union Government report noted in 1946 that the “Ottery camp was covered in water during the winter months and was unfavourably located in shebeen-infested surroundings”. See State Archives (Pretoria), *SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/Volume 1*, letter dated 23/12/1946

⁹³⁹ The fact that there was a very small ‘white’ population in Ottery at that time was seen as an advantage here. Firstly, it was envisaged that the small community would not protest much about the establishment of the institution in the Ottery neighbourhood. Secondly, it fulfilled the requirement that the institution had to be close to a ‘white’ neighbourhood, given that the majority of the ‘white’ staff was expected to reside on the facility. CA, *TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/11, Part 1, ‘Inspeksieverslae, 1947-1961’*, letter dated 4/2/1948

away from his home. Bester noted however that the welfare and trade training emphasis of the institution necessitated the establishment of the institution in Cape Town and thus near to 'coloured' communities. He argued that the location of the facility on the border of 'gang-infested' 'coloured' neighbourhoods like Parkwood, Cook se Bos and Grassy Park, could be 'remedied' by the enclosure of the grounds by a steel fence. This, he argued, would in any case be necessary if the institution was to provide for 500 boys: "Greater surveillance and disciplinary mechanisms would (presumably) be required to monitor the boys". Bester claimed in 1948 that in such a situation the principal of the institution had to in any case take on a far greater supervisory role than at other schools of industries.

Ottery was also the first non-penal institution in South Africa which experimented with a 'mixed' staff.⁹⁴⁰ 'Coloured' teachers, assistant 'technical training' instructors and housemothers were employed alongside 'white' administrative staff, psychologists, technical instructors and child-care instructors. This was also the first time in the history of industrial schools that 'non-white' staff was allowed to partake in the 'rehabilitation' of 'maladjusted' children.

Even though the establishment of the school of industries at Ottery was initially regarded as fortuitous, there is little doubt that the location of Ottery on the border of a 'white' Group Area was not coincidental. For example, when a decision had to be taken in the late 1950s whether Ottery was to be a 'white' or 'coloured' group area, Principal Bester argued that there were very cogent reasons for allowing the area to remain a 'white' neighbourhood. On the one hand, Bester reflected that declaring the Ottery area 'coloured' would certainly make the 'coloured' community better appreciate the institution and overall state provision for the 'coloured' indigent at that time.

⁹⁴⁰ A 'mixed' staff was also used at Diepkloof Reformatory for 'african' boys (situated just outside Johannesburg), though that institution was a penal institution.

Dit mag ook erkentlikheid van die kant van die Kleurlinge in die hand werk (*It might also teach 'coloureds' responsibility, based on this acknowledgement*).⁹⁴¹

On the other hand, Bester noted in 1958 that the 'white' staff living on the institution's premises would not remain at the institution if the area were declared a 'coloured' area. Furthermore, Bester noted that the institution had previously used the surrounding 'white' area as opportunities to teach 'coloured' boys how to work. Every Saturday those boys with good conduct records were allowed to work in the gardens and homes of 'white' community members to earn pocket money. Working for families in the surrounding 'white' communities was also regarded as an important 'rehabilitative tool' where the boys were inducted to a particular work environment. Bester asserted that this 'activity' would be lost to the institution if the area was no longer a 'white' neighbourhood. Lastly, Bester argued that the Ottery institution needed a stable 'white' neighbourhood on its border to serve as a real life example for the boys to which they could aspire and learn from. Bester noted that:

- a) Die Blankes in die omgewing verskaf op Saterdag werk vir die seuns waardeur hulle die geleentheid gestel word om sakgeld te verdien en so 'n nodige beginsel aan te leer dat as 'n mens iets wil he, jy daarvoor moet werk (*The 'whites' in the surrounding areas provide employment for the boys on Saturdays. This provides them with the opportunity to earn pocket money as serves as a necessary lesson that one must work if one wants something*);
- b) Straatgevegte, luidrugtigheid, leegleery, dobbelary, dronkenskap en ander sosiale euwels wat dikwels in 'n Kleurling-gebied aangetref word, sal nie bestaan as die gebied Blank bly. Die opvoeder sal dan na sy omgewing verwys om vir die kind 'n kriterium voor te hou (*If the area remains 'white', problems that generally characterise 'coloured' areas like street fighting, laziness, vagrancy, gambling, drunkenness and other social ills will not exist*);
- c) Om die omgewing vir Kleurlinge te gee sal dit onhoudbaar maak vir die Blank staflede wat op Ottery woon (*It would be impossible or would seriously complicate the lives of the 'white' staff should the area be proclaimed 'coloured'*).⁹⁴²

b) The 'mixed' staff at Ottery

⁹⁴¹ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.123, Ref:79/2/1, "Stigting en Algemeen A30 Part 2, 1953-1960", memo dated 9/5/1958

The way in which the staff was constituted at the Ottery School of industries from 1948 had significant implications for the administration of the institution thereafter, and for the ways in which the ‘coloured’ boys experienced life there.

‘n Baie belangrike aspek van die personeel-inleiding van hierdie skool is die feit dat ‘n gemengde staf aangestel word. Blank is die prinsipaal, vise-prinsipaal, die klerklike staf en die instruktors; kleurling is die onderwysers, assistent-instruktors, matrones en motorbestuurder. ‘n Gemengde personeel is vir die Unie Onderwysdepartement ‘n nuwe en vreemde onderneeming (*The fact that a ‘mixed’ staff has been appointed is a very important aspect of the personnel arrangements at the institution. While the principal, vice-principal, clerical staff and trade instructors are all ‘white’, the teachers, assistant-trade instructors, matrons and driver are all ‘coloured’. A mixed-staff is a new and foreign undertaking for the Union Education Department*).⁹⁴³

In 1938 the Secretary for Education had asserted that opportunities needed to be provided to allow ‘non-white’ adults to participate in the upliftment of ‘non-white’ children.

I believe that we should provide the Non-European races with opportunities for participating in the work of upliftment of their own people. The Europeans have initiated educational and social welfare work on behalf of Non-Europeans, and at present they are still responsible for the major part of such activities, but we should make increasing use of the services of Non-Europeans and provide them with the means of apprenticeship, as it were, in the task of serving their own people.⁹⁴⁴

The appointment of ‘coloured’ teachers at the Ottery institution was most certainly motivated by the ideas postulated above. While little is known of the process whereby ‘coloured’ teachers were appointed to the Ottery institution, it is nonetheless apparent that ‘coloured’ teachers imbued with a sense of doing social work among the boys were preferred. The appointment of ‘coloured’ matrons, kitchen and laundry staff was also part of the attempt to ‘recreate’ (in a limited way) ‘coloured family life’ at the institution. In this regard, the ‘white’ principal was expected to also regulate and determine the nature of ‘coloured’ ‘family life’ at the

⁹⁴² CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.123, Ref:79/2/1, “Stigting en Algemeen A30 Part 2, 1953-1960”, memo dated 9/5/1958

⁹⁴³ CA, *TBK KUS* Vol.124, Ref:79/2/3/2, Part 1, ‘Principal Report of 10 Nov.1948’

⁹⁴⁴ Union of South Africa (1938), *Annual Report of the Union Education Department for 1937 – UG51/1938*, (Pretoria, Government Printer, p.36)

institution. Du Plessis has argued that just as the ‘coloured’ boys required guidance and control, the ‘coloured’ teachers and institutional workers also needed to be taught how to manage the discipline of the boys.

“Weens die onvermoe van die Kleurlingonderwysers om orde en dissipline te handhaaf, is dit nodig dat die blanke ambagsonderwysers die pad vorentoe wys. Die Kaapse skollie laat hom eenvoudig nie onderwerp aan die gesag van ‘n mede-kleurling nie. Namate die kleurlingpersoneel se ondervinding toeneem, sy kwalifikasies verbeter, en die metode van dissipline aanleer behoort hulle die posisie beter te kan hanteer (*Because of the inability of the ‘coloured’ teachers to keep order and control, it is necessary that the ‘white’ trade instructors guide them. The Cape skollie doesn’t seem to want to follow instructions from fellow ‘coloureds’. The situation should improve once the coloured’ personnel gains some experience, once they start improving their qualifications, and once they learn how to control and discipline the boys*).⁹⁴⁵

It can be argued that the greater involvement of many members of the ‘coloured middle-class⁹⁴⁶ in Cape Town from the 1940s was also motivated by social welfare concerns (bound up in political and religious formulations). In that period many ‘coloured’ community figures became involved not only in the proposed establishment⁹⁴⁷ of the Ottery institution in the 1940s, but also in the subsequent administration thereof. For example, Mr. F Hendricks was a member of the Coloured Advisory Council in the 1940s, who, along with other members like JH Joshua and G Golding, was instrumental in putting pressure on the Union Education Department to establish a school of industries for ‘coloured’ boys. Once the institution was established in 1948, F Hendricks then became a member of the Board of Ottery, which oversaw the overall running of the institution. While it is unknown in which capacity Mr F Hendricks served in ‘coloured’ educational circles in that

⁹⁴⁵ Du Plessis (1958), p.296

⁹⁴⁶ RE van der Ross asserted in 1978 that “middle-class Coloureds generally shy away when brought face to face with the large numbers of Coloured people of the lower class with living standards and norms of behaviour which they find unacceptable. They try to help these people because of their sense of loyalty and because they would feel guilty of the same kind of discrimination of which they accuse Whites. While they find their lifestyles repugnant, they seek to help these lower classes for both social and religious reasons”. See Van der Ross, RE (1978), ‘The Dilemma of the Coloured People’, *Race and Politics in South Africa: A Series of papers presented at the Summer School in February 1973*, (University of Cape Town, pp.9-14)

period, he remained on the Board of Ottery for six years until his resignation in 1954 due to a terminal illness.⁹⁴⁸ The Principal of the ('coloured') Battswood Training College, Mr AI Jacobs, filled Hendricks' position on the Board of Ottery. Mr Jacobs also served on the Board⁹⁴⁹ until his death in 1964. Just as the Ottery institution was the first state institution with a 'mixed' staff, it was also the first institution that had a 'mixed' Board of Management. From its inception in 1948 the Board of Management has always included at least two or three 'coloured' community members.

In the case of the 'coloured' and 'white' staff at the Ottery institution, it may well also be argued that their appointment to the facility was motivated by nationalist ideas. Chisholm has asserted that teachers drawn to appointments at schools of industries either regarded the 'correctional' institution as a stepping stone into the Provincial Education Departments, or were men and women imbued with a sense of participating in an important 'volkstaak' (national chore). Chisholm noted that:

From the late 1920s schools of industries/industrial schools were significant bases for some of the more middle class elements attracted to the cause of nationalism. In this regard, 'white' men and women inspired with a vision of doing pioneering work for the 'nation' were recruited largely from the Afrikaans-speaking university education departments, university colleges and colleges of education and appointed to the top positions at 'correctional' institutions.⁹⁵⁰

In this regard, the possible nationalist-inspired motivations of the 'mixed' staff of Ottery would have led to quite different approaches taken by the various staff members to the needs of the 'coloured' boys. The envisaged objectives of the various staff members would also have been significantly different. The first principal of the institution, FA Bester, was for example drawn to the post at Ottery

⁹⁴⁷ Central Archives (Pretoria), *SAB UOD, Vol.218, Ref:E14/19C/1*, "Nywerheidskole vir Nie-Blankes, 1946-1957", see correspondence between the Coloured Advisory Council (CAC) and the Department of Social Welfare dated 26/6/1946, 24/10/1946 and 23/12/1946

⁹⁴⁸ OSIA, *Ref:108/28/3, 'Notule van Vergaderinge, 1948-1974'*, Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Ottery on 15/9/1954, p.1

⁹⁴⁹ OSIA, *Ref:108/28/3, 'Notule van Vergaderinge, 1948-1974'*, Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Ottery on 17/11/1954 and 17/2/1965. Mr Percy Sonn took his place on the Board in 1965.

⁹⁵⁰ Chisholm (1989), p.214; See also Paton, A (1986), *Diepkloof: Reflections of Diepkloof Reformatory, Writings compiled and edited by Clyde Broster*, (Cape Town)

because of the opportunity it provided him as an Afrikaner priest to do evangelical work amongst 'coloured' people. In interviews with the nine informants and staff members who served under him, it was apparent that Bester was described in varied ways as a disciplinarian, a staunch Afrikaner Nationalist, as well as a person who cared deeply about his 'charges'. Lourens Marcus reflected in 1999 that Bester was a very firm but fair man and that his advice and aid had on many occasions significantly influenced his life.⁹⁵¹ He indicated that, after leaving the Ottery institution in the 1950s, he had written to Bester on numerous occasions and had received responses to every letter. Dr. JC Carstens, who succeeded Bester as principal of Ottery, was a psychologist at Porter Reformatory before his appointment in 1969. He had also previously served as a psychologist at the Ottery facility and was instrumental in the development of a program of psychological services for 'coloured' children on the Cape Flats in the 1950s. In an interview with Dr Carstens in 1998 he reflected that he had become attached to schools of industries and reformatories because of his scientific interest in understanding 'coloured' people.⁹⁵²

Mrs Emily Filander served as a matron at Ottery from 1948 till 1989. Her husband was appointed in 1948 as the official driver for the institution. They subsequently lived on the grounds of the institution till his death in the 1980s. In an interview with Mrs Filander in September 1998 she reflected that the 'coloured' boys at Ottery were all 'her children' and that she could still remember most of their names (nicknames). All nine informants fondly referred to Mrs Filander as Ma Emily. Mrs Filander noted that during her stay at Ottery she had raised two daughters, who had grown up on the grounds of the institution and had 'socialised' with many of the boys at the institution. She suggested in 1998 that her girls had been more adversely affected by the 'snubbing' they got from the children of 'white' staff members, than from interacting with the 'coloured' boys.

⁹⁵¹ Interview with Marcus Lourens (Informant 2) dated 25/8/1999

⁹⁵² See Interview with Dr. JC Carstens on 5 September 1998 at his home in Panorama, Cape Town

All the informants also spoke of the influence of their mathematics teacher at Ottery, Mr Fraser.⁹⁵³ While he was generally characterised as a firm disciplinarian who ‘didn’t take any nonsense’, all the informants asserted that he became their father figure while at Ottery and that he impacted in significant ways on their lives. They also spoke about the alcoholism, poor professionalism and uncaring attitudes of some of their ‘coloured’ teachers. Ashley Golding reflected in 1999 that one of his teachers had known he sold dagga at the institution and had constantly blackmailed him ‘to share his booty’. He noted that while this association had significantly influenced his high school grades at Ottery, he sometimes had to provide the teacher with all his funds (even those that he earned legitimately by ‘working out’ on Saturdays).

The various informants also spoke of the varying influences of their respective ‘white’ trade instructors at Ottery. While some of the ‘white’ staff was described as ‘vicious’, ‘brutal’ and ‘racist’, others were portrayed as ‘caring’, ‘warm’ and affecting. Pieter Botha reflected in 1999 that his trade instructor always ‘looked out for him’ and that he had protected him during his stay at the institution.

Mr Volksteun was really like a father to me. When there were gang fights and things like that I used to always ask if I could sleep by his home (as his helper) and he used to always protect me in that way. He created space for me to begin to enjoy myself while I was there. I mean, at Ottery what was the possibility of that happening? He also convinced the principal not to sell me to that lady, and later advised me to go to the army.⁹⁵⁴

While the observations offered above are limited and cannot be regarded as fair representations of the various members of staff at Ottery, nor of why they became attached to schools of industries, the examples suggest that teaching and working at the Ottery facility was a very complex exercise. These were individuals that for various reasons took up appointments at the institution to work with ‘coloured’ boys

⁹⁵³ Mr Fraser is the father of a previous South African Minister of Welfare, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi. Ms Fraser-Moleketi apparently spent much of her childhood and adolescence at the Ottery institution. Her family resided on the grounds until her father was transferred to the Faure Reformatory. See Interview with Lourens Marcus dated 25/8/1999

⁹⁵⁴ Interview with Informant 6, Pieter Botha, dated 13/7/1999

deemed to be ‘in need of care’. In most cases they were drawn to the work by a complex mix of religious, economic, welfare and nationalist motivations. In this regard, a brief case study of the life of the first principal of the institution is outlined below. While the case study serves merely as an indication of the motivations of one man, it is provided to show that the motivations of individual Ottery staff members significantly and variously informed the experiences of ‘coloured’ boys at the Ottery School of Industries.

*The mesh of ideas that motivated Reverend Bester: A brief case study*⁹⁵⁵

Reverend FA Bester initially studied theology at the Mission Institute in Wellington. He then practiced his vocation as a Minister of Religion in the 1930s at the Dutch Reformed Mission Church for ‘coloureds’ in Bloemfontein. Dr. Bester reflected in an interview in 1996 that he had then switched to the educational field. He noted that in his first theology lecture his professor had asserted that education was centrally important to the success of mission work amongst the ‘coloured’ population. “As the bible was the sole source of religious stability, coloured people simply had to be able to read”. Bester asserted that it was this observation that spurred him to pursue his studies in education at the Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoer Onderwys in 1938. During the course of completing the Bachelor of Education diploma, he had met a Union Education Department Inspector of Education (name unknown) from Bloemfontein who advised him to write to the Bloemfontein branch of the ‘Native’ Education Department if he desired a senior secondary education post in a ‘coloured’ school in the Orange Free State. Given that no secondary education facilities existed for ‘coloured’ children in the Free State, Bester accepted the post of principal at the Heatherdale Primary School for Coloured Youths at the end of 1939. As this was the largest ‘coloured’ school in the Orange Free State he accepted the post with the proviso that attempts would be made to incorporate a high school at Heatherdale in due course. (This was started in

⁹⁵⁵ The information about the life of FA Bester is derived from four interviews conducted with him at his home in Pinelands, Cape Town in 1996 and 1997. The author is still in negotiations with Dr Bester’s son to donate his father’s papers and other writings to the Institute for Historical Research at the University of the Western Cape.

February 1940). Bester remained at the school till 1947. In that year he oversaw 'his' second matric class. Dr Bester asserted in 1996 that he had played a significant part in ensuring that one of his female matric students of 1947 later enrolled at the University of Fort Hare.⁹⁵⁶

Bester reflected in 1996 that it was at this period in his life that he had realised "the urgent need for technical education in the socialisation of 'coloured' children", and also that other than perhaps arguing for the introduction of technical training as part of the curriculum at Heatherdale, he "had accomplished all that he could at that school". Upon reading a newspaper advertisement for the post of principal at Ottery (with a 300 pound annual salary increase), he applied for the position thinking that the Industrial School at Ottery would probably be the only opportunity the 'coloured' child would have to receive technical education in that period.

Significantly, FA Bester was motivated by a mixture of ideas and social understandings that included notions of evangelism amongst 'coloureds', humanitarian and social welfare intervention, and nationalist aspirations. FA Bester was subsequently appointed Principal of the Ottery School of Industries in January 1948 and remained in that position until the end of 1967. During his term there he also completed his doctoral dissertation "which sought to understand the cultural background of 'coloured' delinquent boys and the implications thereof for their rehabilitation."

Oor 'n tydperk van agt jaar onderwyservaring aan die Heatherdale Kleurling-Hoerskool in Bloemfontein en dertien jaar aan die Ottery Nywerheidskool vir Kleurlingseuns, het ek die geleentheid gehad om die Kleurling as mens en veral die probleme van die Kleurlingkind van naderby te leer ken. Met verskerpte besinning het dit al hoe duideliker geword dat die Kleurlingkind in besondere sin die produk van sy hereditere en maatskaplike erfgoedere is. Hierdie studie is 'n beskeie poging om aan te dui hoe hierdie erfgoedere in gedragsafwyking neerslag vind, en hoe daarmee in 'n heropvoedingsprogram rekening gehou behoort te word (*With eight years experience as an*

⁹⁵⁶ Bester noted that the student had contacted him at Ottery and asked if he could secure funding for her to enrol at university. Bester apparently wrote to his previous 'wit gemeenskap' in the Orange Free State, who then provided the funds.

educationist at the Heatherdale Coloured High School in Bloemfontein and thirteen years at the Ottery School of Industries, I had the opportunity to get to know and view up front the Coloureds as well as their problems. From a critical perspective it became clear that the Coloured child was a product of his social and cultural heritage. This study is an attempt to show how these hereditary factors informed the delinquent behaviour of Coloured boys and its implications for programmes that sought to effect their rehabilitation).⁹⁵⁷

In 1968 Bester became Rector of the Hewat Teacher Training College in Athlone. After one year as Rector he was given the choice of either returning to Ottery as principal or accepting an inspectorate post within the education division of the Department of Coloured Affairs. He served the Coloured Affairs Education Department in an official capacity for ten years until his retirement in 1979. He then served the Coloured Affairs Department in an unofficial capacity till 1993. Bester reflected in 1996 that during that time he had also been seconded to advise the Coloured Affairs Department in Namibia. Dr. FA Bester died in September 1999.



⁹⁵⁷ Bester, FA (1961), *Die etiologiese agtergrond van die gedragafwykende Kleurlingkind en die implikasies daarvan vir sy heropvoeding*, (Potchefstroom, Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoer Onderwys, unpublished doctoral thesis, thesis, p. i)

ii) Approach 2: The provision of professional services at the Ottery School of Industries from 1948

Earlier in Section C it was argued that the United Party addressed the problem of welfare provision for ‘non-white’ children in the 1940s in the context of urban social issues⁹⁵⁸. It did so by positing welfare provision for ‘non-whites’ as an intrinsic aspect of the ‘security’ and labour needs of the urban ‘white’ population at that time. From 1948 the Ottery School of Industries endeavoured to provide ‘coloured’ boys with welfare and education facilities previously unavailable to them. However, these facilities were provided in a highly structured environment where discipline, conformity, routine and control over their lives constituted the basis of the intervention programmes. On the one hand, the institution sought to instil in ‘coloured’ boys particular attitudes to work and to the needs of the dominant society, hoping that these lessons would be transferred to the various boys’ work and social contexts once they were released from state care. The provision of schooling and trade training at Ottery was regarded as an important rehabilitative tool whereby pupils could be systematically exposed to a worldview and reality portrayed as natural and given. By ‘equipping’ pupils with particular ‘skills’ to enter the labour market upon their release, the institution at Ottery also sought to expose ‘coloured’ boys to the accepted basis of employment, remuneration and social mobility on the outside.

On the other hand, the institution also sought to teach ‘coloured’ boys the unacceptability of anti-social behaviour. It was posited that by attending school and trade training classes regularly, ‘coloured’ boys could be inducted into ‘acceptable’ norms of behaviour (supposedly found wanting among the majority of the ‘coloured’ indigent population). The Principal of the Ottery institution, FA Bester,

⁹⁵⁸ Principal Bester noted in 1954 that up to 75% of the ‘coloured’ boys sent to Porter Reformatory and the Ottery School of Industries in that period came from urban or peri-urban centres. See CA, *TBK KUS*, Vol.124, Ref: 79/2/3/2, ‘Jaarverslag oor die Werksaamhede van die Ottery Nywerheidskool in 1954’, p.2

noted in 1958 that the main purpose of the institution was to effect the rehabilitation of delinquent 'coloured' boys on four fronts:

- a) Provision was made to remove the boy from his everyday environment and place him in a hostel where he could be taught cleanliness and self respect ('die kind word weggeneem van sy gewone omgewing en geplaas in 'n koshuis waar hy geleer word van skoonheid en selfrespek');
- b) Once in the institution the boy could be forced to attend school regularly ('sorg word gedra dat die kind die skool gereeld bydra');
- c) Through the technical training provided at the institution, the boy could be taught by way of work training how to earn his living upon leaving the institution ('deur tegniese opleiding word die kind in staat gestel om deur middel van geskoolde arbeid by skoolverlating sy eie brood te win');
- d) Via the psychology clinic, it is endeavoured to address the delinquent behaviour of the 'coloured' boy using scientific and psychological methods ('deur van 'n sielkundige kliniek gebruik te maak word gepoog om gedragsmoeilikhede van die kleurlingseun op 'n wtenskaplike sielkundige metode die hoof te bied').⁹⁵⁹

In his opening address to the Board of the institution in 1948 Bester indicated that the organisation of the Ottery School of Industries needed to be specially adapted so as to modify the behaviour of its 'coloured' pupils.⁹⁶⁰ The provision of professional services at the institution was understood at the time in very limited ways. Bester noted in 1948 that:

Vir geruime tyd reeds bestaan daar etlike nywerheidskole vir blanke kinders. Gaandeweg het die besef deurgedring dat 'n soortgelyke inrigting vir die kleurling-bevolking gestig moet word. Veral in die Kaapse Skiereiland waar groot getalle verwaarlose kinders sonder behoorlike sorg op die strate rond grootword; waar hulle lewensnorme ontleen word aan die kode van die straat en die bende; waar hulle uiteindelik weens verwaarlosing en verwildering noodwendig halfmisdadige neigings openbaar; waar baie wat daar nie hoort nie, weens die algemene gebrek aan 'n ander inrigting in die Porter-verbeteringskool beland om daar verder in misdadigheid (my emphases) op te was, veral in hierdie Kaapse Skiereiland het die behoefte aan 'n nywerheidskool vir kleurlingseuns hom onmiskenbaar voorgedoen (*For a long time now there have been many schools of industries for white children. It was increasingly realised that a similar institution needed to be established for the coloured population. There are large numbers of neglected children here in the Cape Peninsula that grow up on the streets*)

⁹⁵⁹ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/19/7, "Kleurlingsake: Ottery Nywerheidskool- Inspeksieverslae", memo dated 8 August 1958

⁹⁶⁰ CA, TBK KUS, Vol. 124, Ref: 79/2/3/2, Part 1, 'Prinsipaal-verslae: 1948-1954, report dated 10/11/1948'

unattended, where their living standards are defined by the law of the streets and the gangs, where because of neglect and wildness they begin to show signs of delinquency, where many who simply do not belong there and because of the shortage of institutions land up at Porter Reformatory where they get further involved in criminality. There is thus a special need for a school of industries for coloured boys here in the Cape Peninsula.) [not a verbatim translation]⁹⁶¹

This view of ‘coloured’ boys, and the services provided for them at Ottery, changed little in the period under review. In 1965 Bester framed his explanation of the role of professional services at the institution within a particular ‘correctional’ framework:

“Ottery is ‘n nywerheidskool wat hom ten doel stel aan die rehabilitasie van sorgbehoewende, veelal gedragsafwykende, Kleurlingseuns. Om hierdie kinders deur die skoolstander te help, of hom die basiese beginsels van ‘n ambag te laat bemeester, is een ding, en ‘n belangriker een; maar ‘n ander ding, en ‘n nog belangriker een, is om die seun aan ‘n lewenswyse te gewen wat maatskaplik aanvaarbaar is. Gedragsrehabilitasie is die eintlike oogmerk waaraan alle ander oogmerke in die klaskamer, werkwinkel, hostel, kliniek, op die sportveld e.d.m. diensbaar (Ottery is a school of industries whose main purpose is the rehabilitation of ‘in need of care’, especially delinquent, coloured boys. To aid these boys scholastically and to allow them to master the basics in a trade is one aspect (and an important one) of the institution’s role, but another aspect, and perhaps a more important one, is to instil in the boy ways of living that are acceptable to society as a whole. Behaviour rehabilitation is ultimately the main goal of the institution, whether it be in the classroom, workshop, hostel, clinic or on the sportsfield).⁹⁶²

This was not necessarily a view that was widely held. Other than officials that were closely linked to ‘correctional’ facilities, many childcare practitioners at various times were of the ‘simple’ opinion that Ottery was a facility where ‘coloured’ boys could be trained to be artisans. This was particularly apparent in correspondence between the Principal of Ottery and the South African National Council for Child Welfare in 1969. The Child Welfare Council queried why ‘coloured’ boys being released from the institution did not possess academic and trade qualifications to become apprentices.

⁹⁶¹ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.124, Ref:79/2/3/2, Part 1, Principal Report dated 10/11/1948

⁹⁶² CA, TBK KUS, Vol.2585, Ref: 7/33/10/D10, ‘Prinsipaalverslae- 1960-1965’, Principal Report of 1965, p.1

Die bewering is gemaak dat wanneer leerlinge uit die kleurling-nywerheidskool ontslaan word, hulle akademiese kwalifikasies hulle nie in staat stel om as vakleerlinge in te skryf nie. Volgens die Vereeniging het hulle gevalle gehad waar die seuns opleiding gekry het maar nie as opgeleide vakmanne of selfs as vakleerlinge aanvaar is nie. U kommentaar oor die hele kwessie van opleiding aan 'n nywerheidskool word afgewag, want ons het al baie kinders verwys na u inrigting vir hierdie doel. (*It has been suggested that when pupils are released from Ottery their academic and trade training does not qualify them to enrol as apprentices. According to the Council they've had many cases where boys received training at Ottery but could not be regarded as artisans or even be enrolled as apprentices. Your response is eagerly awaited as many of our members have on many occasions referred boys to Ottery precisely for this purpose*).⁹⁶³

In his response, Dr. JC Carstens, Principal of Ottery from 1969, re-asserted that:

Dit was nooit die bedoeling dat nywerheidskole opgeleide vakmanne moet produseer nie. Die ambagsopleiding wat leerlinge in die nywerheidskool ontvang, het 'n meerledige doelstelling. Ambagsopleiding word gebruik as 'n middel tot 'n doel, naamlik rehabilitasie (*It was never the intention that schools of industries would produce trained artisans. The purpose of trade training that pupils receive at the school of industries is more complex than that. It is mainly used as a means to effect the rehabilitation of pupils*).⁹⁶⁴

As was noted in the earlier discussion of the motivations given by practitioners at various children's homes for the transfer of adolescent boys to the Ottery School of Industries, the term trade training was certainly understood in a variety of ways at that time. It may well also be that trade training was used simplistically to justify the separation of 'coloured' boys with any kind of social problem from 'normal' 'coloured' children. However, the fact of the matter is that once a 'coloured' boy entered the school of industries at Ottery, academic education and trade training came to shape his life in particular ways. These ways were not necessarily linked to the actual content and methods that were used to teach them.

Academic schooling and trade training as 'signifiers' of success

⁹⁶³ CA, TBK KUS, Ref:7/10 Part 1, A30, 'Correspondence between Dec 1952 and Nov 1978', Letter from the South African National Council for Child Welfare dated 30/4/1969, ref:7/33/14

⁹⁶⁴ CA, TBK KUS, Ref:7/10 Part 1, A30, 'Correspondence between Dec 1952 and Nov 1978', Letter from Carstens to the South African National Council for Child Welfare dated 20/5/1969, ref:7/33/14

On many occasions ‘coloured’ boys were sent to the Ottery School of Industries to benefit from the trade training and academic schooling available there. These schooling provisions were crucial tools that were needed to re-socialise the child to the environment he would encounter upon leaving the institution. Education and training were also regarded as forms of moral socialisation where the ‘coloured’ boy was re-orientated to “what God (supposedly) held in store for him”. These were the goals of all schools of industries in South Africa at that time, whether they were for ‘white’ or ‘coloured’ children. However, in the case of the ‘coloured’ boy, trade training and schooling was provided in the context of notions of ‘coloured’ biological inferiority, ‘mental retardation’, and ‘family and moral degradation’, and at a time when the training deemed ‘most worthwhile’ for ‘coloured’ boys was ‘training for work’. The focus on ‘training for work’ was justified by referring to statistics of the ‘generally low’ IQ and trade proficiency levels of indigent ‘coloured’ boys at that time. For this reason the academic schooling provided at Ottery tended to focus on the lower standards and stopped at Std VII (during the period under review).

Academic schooling at Ottery

When a boy arrived at the Ottery institution he was not only allocated to an academic class based on the last schooling standard that he had passed, but also on his evaluated IQ level. This ‘determination’ crucially influenced the level of trade training that he was provided with at the institution. Boys that had passed Std VI were the only ones that were eligible to enrol for NTC1, which was the first step to becoming apprenticed in a particular trade. Boys with lower grades were simply provided with ‘training for work’.

The IQ tests provided to ‘coloured’ boys when they arrived at the Ottery institution thus came to play crucial roles in determining the nature of their institutional experiences. For example, when Frank Adams arrived at the institution in 1964 his low IQ rating led to him having to repeat Std III at the institution. Even though he had passed Std III with a B-pass at his previous school, the IQ and reading test was

used to indicate that Frank was not ready for the following standard.⁹⁶⁵ Bester claimed in 1965 that the level of schooling at ‘coloured’ schools was generally low and that ‘coloured’ teachers, because of their ‘sympathy’, tended to inflate their students’ marks.⁹⁶⁶ This was an attitude that was also prevalent in the collection of data about the special needs of ‘coloured’ children in the period after the Second World War. At that time, officials involved in the *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Deviate Children (Non-European)* had indicated that ‘coloured’ teachers were too sympathetic towards ‘coloured’ children, and that they were not ‘objective enough’ when assessing ‘their needs’.⁹⁶⁷

School grades differentially impacted on the lives of the boys. In the cases of Walter Petersen and Gasant Hendricks they were already sixteen years old when they arrived at the Ottery institution and had only passed Std III. Given their ‘advanced’ age and the fact that they were regarded as ‘scholastically backward’, the two boys would not have been able to gain the academic qualifications to do NTC1 before being released from the institution upon their eighteenth birthdays. In their case, trade training simply entailed ‘training for work’.

When Pieter Botha arrived at Ottery in 1965 his IQ level was adjudged to be 103 (this was regarded as very high for a ‘coloured’ boy). He had also passed Std VII by that time and had been trained in a trade at the St. Joseph’s Trade School in Aliwal-

⁹⁶⁵ Frank reflected in 1999 that he had not been aware of the importance of the IQ test when taking it, and had simply scribbled on the answer sheets. He noted however that he was quickly promoted to Std IV.

“When I told them that I had to go to Std IV, they wouldn’t accept that. But I did so well in the June examinations that they quickly realised their mistake and promoted me in that same year. The funny part was that I was only in Std IV for six months, because I passed the end of year examination too.”

See Interview with Frank Adams, Interview 4b, p.6

⁹⁶⁶ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.2585, Ref:7/33/10/D10, ‘Principal Report of 1965’, p.2. Also see CA, TBK KUS, Vol.124, Ref:79/2/3/2, ‘Principal Report of 1954’, pp.25-29. In 1969 the South African Council for Child Welfare queried why a ‘coloured’ boy had been demoted from Std VII to Std IV when he arrived at Ottery. In his reply, Principal Carstens firstly indicated that every case was handled with care and according to scientific methods. He then noted that the boy probably played truant often seeing that he was a ‘behaviour deviate’, and that it was felt that his previous grade was not a true reflection of his ability. See CA, TBK KUS, Ref:7/10/Part 1, A30, 108/6/3, ‘Correspondence between Carstens and the Child Welfare Council dated 30/4/1969 and 29/5/1969’

North. In Pieter's case he hardly attended school while at Ottery. Pieter reflected in 1999 that:

When I got to Ottery, I don't know why, but they somehow respected me. After I wrote that IQ test I maybe proved my worth but after that I didn't ever go to school there. I just worked for the institution, whether on the grounds or in the workshops. My instructor always used to tell me, 'Pieter, you've done this before, so show the boys how'. The boys always used to comment that I spent every day in the workshop. Mostly, I used to do 'outside' work. You know, someone looking for a carpenter, they used to say, 'use Pieter'. I really enjoyed that. Did you know that every door made for and hung in the school buildings has my name carved on the top of them?⁹⁶⁸

It is significant here that once a boy had attained the highest level of schooling that the institution could provide, he was inevitably either released from the institution or allowed to 'work out' until such time that he could be released.

Jerome Moses was identified as a hard-working pupil in his trade workshop. This led to him being used in the workshops to make benches, desks, tables, furniture for the staff and other items sold to people 'outside' the institution. Jerome reflected in 1999 that he could never understand his grades while at the institution. Sometimes he had done well overall in the examinations but still failed, and at other times he had not attended school at all and had not even attended school (when he was busy working for the institution) but would pass.

It is clear that the nature of schooling at the Ottery School was informed by particular ideas of the 'coloured boy' at that time, as well as of their contextual circumstances. It is also clear that the marks attained at school of the individual boys were bound up in a combination of ways with IQ levels, individual scholastic ability, and how many years the individual boys were expected to remain at the institution. From the example provided by Jerome it may well be asked how

⁹⁶⁷ UG30/1945 AN792-1950, pp.1-2 and p.142. Also see Section B, Chapter 3

⁹⁶⁸ Interview with Pieter Botha, Interview 6, pp.9-13

accurate the school reports of the boys were. This is particularly evident in the large numbers of boys simply getting 50% in their grading, year in and year out.

Schooling clearly served as a very important 'signifier' at the Ottery institution to ascertain what 'could be expected' from individual boys during their stay at the facility. Institutional officials often asserted that boys with low IQs would probably 'fall back into crime' upon their release from the institution more readily than boys with high IQs. At such times no differentiation was made between 'delinquent' and 'non-delinquent' boys. This had significant consequences for some of the boys. On the one hand, fourteen-year-old Gregory Le Roux was sent to Ottery in 1966 after he was found guilty of theft by the Juvenile Court.⁹⁶⁹ By that time, he had already passed Std IV and was adjudged to have an IQ of 114. It was argued that there was a very real chance that he would 'succeed on the outside'.⁹⁷⁰ On the other hand, fifteen-year-old Gasant Hendricks was sent to the Ottery institution in 1959 because he was an orphan. By that time, he had only passed Std II. It was argued that he would 'probably resort to crime upon release'. Gasant was only released from Ottery in 1962 because his sister had found him employment and because she was deemed to be (by social workers) an 'upright' and 'deeply religious' individual.⁹⁷¹

Trade training at Ottery

It was asserted in Section B, Chapter 4 that the trade training needs of 'coloured' boys in the period after the Second World War was addressed in the context of 'coloured' indigence and delinquency in urban areas. In this period trade training and 'teaching' people 'the habits of work' were essential aspects of state policy in relation not only to the reconstruction of the South African economy, but also to the 'reformation' of 'disorganised', 'maladjusted' and poor families. 'Coloured' boys at

⁹⁶⁹ Given his domestic circumstances his case was converted into a Children's Court enquiry, whereupon he could be sent to Ottery. See OSIA, File H, 'Social Worker Report dated 14/11/1966', pp.3-4

⁹⁷⁰ See OSIA, File H, 'Report with an eye to release dated 11/11/1969'

⁹⁷¹ OSIA, File G(i), 'Report with an eye to release dated 20/11/1962'

the Ottery School of Industries were therefore provided with trade training for religious, economic, political and social reasons.

After the Second World War it was recognised that work had to be created for the urban ‘non-white’ unemployed to enable them to enter the ranks of the workers and to be self-supporting. It is significant however that in this period securing skilled employment was essentially determined by the prevailing system of apprenticeship. From 1948 the provision of trade training at Ottery was framed keeping in mind this system of apprenticeship, as well as the context of the type of work that it was envisaged ‘coloured’ pupils would encounter upon being released from state care. The Botha Commission Report of 1956/7 asserted in that period that ‘coloured’ males were predominantly employed in industry and agriculture⁹⁷² and that the type of trades offered to ‘coloured’ males had to be provided with this in mind. Bester noted in 1954 that besides these ‘practical’ considerations, most ‘coloured’ boys were “in any case scholastic retards and behaviour deviates which meant that they would never be able to gain access to apprenticeship.”⁹⁷³

Alhoewel verreweg die meeste leerlinge, volgens die mening van die hoof in sy jaarverslag van 1952, nie kwalifiseerde ambagsmanne sal word nie, is die onderliggende gedagte by die ambagsopleiding om die leerling ‘n basiese opleiding in ‘n ambag te gee sodat hy ‘n verdienste as ambagsman of as arbeider kan vind nadat hy die skool verlaat het; daarby het die praktiese werk terapeutiese waarde en is ‘n bate vir die inrigting in sy wordingsproses (*Although the overwhelming majority of the pupils, according to the principal report of 1952, won’t become qualified artisans, the central motivation for providing trade training to a ‘coloured’ boy is to provide him with an income of either an artisan or a manual worker upon his release from the institution. Practical work has a therapeutic value and is of significant advantage to the institution in its shaping of the child (not direct translation).*)⁹⁷⁴

⁹⁷² According to the *Bureau of Census and Statistics in 1946*, 36% of ‘coloured’ males worked in industry, and 36% of ‘coloured’ males in agriculture. Cited in the Botha Commission Report (1956/7), p.12

⁹⁷³ The reference to scholastic retardation here refers to the low schooling levels of pupils. Pupils were required to have passed Std VIII to gain entry to trade examinations for eventual apprenticeship. The reference to behaviour deviation points to the particular needs of the boys and their inability to cope with intellectual challenges. See CA, *TBK KUS, Vol.124, Ref:79/2/3/2, ‘Principal Report of 1954’*, pp.34-5

In 1954 there were nine trades offered at the Ottery institution. There were workshops for tailoring, shoe-making, carpentry, building, plastering, plumbing, upholstery, cabinet-making, and boat machinery. In terms of the number of workshops that ‘coloured’ boys were attached to at that time, there were also two further ‘workshops’ in agriculture and catering. The latter two workshops were euphemisms for the manual work conducted by boys on the grounds of the institution, and in the kitchen, washrooms, and laundry.⁹⁷⁵

From the various Principal Reports in the 1950s it is clear that the trades provided at Ottery were formulated around the needs of the institution. For example, the tailoring workshop made all the trousers, shirts and socks that were required by the boys at the institution. The shoe-making workshop provided the boys with shoes, while the workshops in building, plastering, upholstery, plumbing and carpentry oversaw the repair and upkeep of the institutional buildings.⁹⁷⁶ It was maintained at the time that the boys acquired valuable practical (work) experience in providing the institution with the necessary goods and labour. Gasant Hendricks reflected in 1999 that:

We used to build and repair all the stuff that was needed. There were no other builders, painters or plumbers. We did all the work. At one time they told us that we were going to build a huge swimming pool. I was in the plumbing workshop so we laid all the pipes under the ground, and did some digging work. I didn’t mind doing the manual labour. I had never swum in a pool before so all I told myself all the time was that ‘one-day I’m going to swim here’.⁹⁷⁷

⁹⁷⁴ Du Plessis (1958), p.300

⁹⁷⁵ Bester noted in 1954 that working in the kitchen for example entailed cutting wood for the stoves, throwing coal into the furnaces, cleaning the stoves, scrubbing the floors, and cleaning dishes. See CA, *TBK KUS, Vol.124, Ref:79/2/3/2, ‘Principal Report of 1954’*, pp.30-40

⁹⁷⁶ Du Plessis asserted that:

“Die ambagte op die skool, so wil dit voorkom, is geskik om die basiese behefte van die skool te voorsien (*The trades, it would seem, are provided to see to the basic needs of the institution*)”

See Du Plessis (1958), p.299. Also see CA, *TBK KUS, Vol.124, Ref:79/2/3/2, Principal Report of 1951’*, p.4

⁹⁷⁷ Interview 6, p.6 and p.17; The pool that Gasant refers to here was built in the period 1961-2 and was olympic-size. At the time it was one of the biggest swimming pools in a ‘coloured’ area. Gasant was released before the pool was completed.

In 'learning to work' it also did not matter in which workshop a boy was placed. Jerome Moses reflected in 1999 that when he arrived at Ottery in 1965 he was overly concerned about the trade in which he was placed.

Aag, man, look I was just starting out, getting into a field of work. They told me to choose a trade and my attitude was that I would succeed in anything, so if I later did not like a trade, I could always move to another.⁹⁷⁸

Frank Adams reflected however that he had chosen his trade for particular reasons. He noted in 1999 that he had chosen tailoring because it was the cheapest trade to maintain.

All you needed was a scissors and a cutting machine. I quickly made the judgement call that when I left Ottery I wanted to be able to afford the tools to do my trade.⁹⁷⁹

Gasant Hendricks reflected in 1999 that he had been forced to do plumbing because all the workshops were full at that time. He noted that when he was eventually released from Ottery, he had resolved to forget the trade training that he had been taught.

We were asked to choose a trade, but every time we mentioned a trade, they would say, 'no, that is full'. I wanted to become a painter or a carpenter, something that I knew I would find work in. But they decided to put me in plumbing because it was the only workshop that could accommodate both my twin brother and I at that time. I wasn't interested in plumbing. I hated it and vowed never to use the trade.⁹⁸⁰

Lourens Marcus noted that he had been interested in becoming a motor mechanic but that in the 1950s this trade was not available to 'coloureds'. He had instead been trained in the boat machinery trade. It had been expected that he would find work in this field maintaining the engines of ships and trawlers upon his release from the institution.

I always wanted to become a mechanic, so when a boat machinery workshop opened at Ottery (after I'd been there a couple of years), I asked Dr Bester if I could be transferred there. You see, I was a bit mechanically minded so I used to do quite a bit of fixing on the institution. When they opened that

⁹⁷⁸ Interview with Jerome Moses, Interview 3, p.2; Ironically, this was not the case. Once a boy was placed in a workshop, he remained there until he was released from the institution.

⁹⁷⁹ Interview with Frank Adams, Interview 4, p.5

⁹⁸⁰ Interview with Gasant Hendricks, Interview 7, p.5

workshop, they knew what I could do. If things didn't work, I would mess around with it until it did. I learnt welding too, so after following my instructor around at first, they came to rely a lot on me to fix things all over the institution. I was a regular Mr. Fix-it. Years later I became a backyard mechanic and had many many clients from all over Cape Town asking me to fix their cars. Even today, my son is a mechanic (because of me) and at the age of sixty-five, I still help him out when he can't figure something out.⁹⁸¹

From interviews with the nine informants it was found that only two of them had found employment in their trade upon release from the Ottery institution. Ironically, the two informants were sent to Ottery for reasons linked to delinquency. Furthermore, both informants did not remain more than three years 'practicing their trade', before committing criminal acts and being incarcerated. From the above discussion it is clear that their 'success' or 'failure' in finding employment outside the institution upon their release was linked to a number of variables. With regard to the therapeutic value of trade training it is also apparent that the boys were less inducted into the value of work than to accepting their station in life.

In conclusion, it is ironic that compulsory education was provided at the Ottery institution for indigent and delinquent 'coloured' boys in the 1950s and 1960s at a time when education was not compulsory for 'coloured' children in 'normal' institutions and schools.⁹⁸²

iii) Approach 3: The 'correctional' and punishment milieu of Ottery

A central feature of life at the Ottery institution was the breakdown of barriers that had previously separated the way in which 'coloured' boys experienced life and the ways in which they tended to eat, sleep and work. Once a boy arrived at Ottery, the organisation of the institution structured every aspect of his life. Goffman has described this in the following way:

⁹⁸¹ Interview with Lourens Marcus, Interview 2b, p.16-17

⁹⁸² It is also a very strange quirk of fate that by only providing state trade training for 'coloured' boys at 'correctional' facilities, non-indigent and non-delinquent 'coloured' boys were denied access to this form of education in the period 1948 to 1970. Many parents in that period applied to have their children acquire trade training at the Ottery institution. They were told that their children could only attend the institution if they were deemed to be 'in need of care' by the Children's Court.

First, all aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority. Second, each phase of the member's daily activities is carried on in the immediate company of a large batch of others, all of whom are treated alike and required to do the same thing together. Third, all phases of the day's activities are tightly scheduled, with one activity leading at a prearranged time into the next, the whole sequence of activities being imposed from above by a system of explicit formal rulings and a body of officials. Finally, the various enforced activities are brought together into a single rational plan purportedly designed to fulfil the official aims of the institution.⁹⁸³

In this regard, the physical structure of the institution did not only then inform the way in which the boys experienced life at Ottery (as noted in Approach 1), but was also used to construct every moment of each boy's life at the facility. While the interaction between structure and experience left much room for individual agency and left a great degree of slippage between intent and outcome, it is clear that almost every activity that 'coloured' boys partook in at the institution was closely linked to the structure of the facility. The activities of 'coloured' boys were rigidly 'regulated' in the classroom, in the workshop, in the dormitories, on the sports-fields, and in the kitchen. Even the leisure-time of the various boys' was controlled by the institutional regime. In his book *Asylums* of 1961, Erving Goffman has defined institutions that 'behave in this way' as 'total institutions'.

They are places of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the larger society for a appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life. They are also social hybrids, part residential communities, part formal organisations. They are the forcing houses for changing persons.⁹⁸⁴

There is a mountain of documentation and evidence that can be used to show the ways in which the Ottery facility regulated and controlled each minute detail of the lives of the 'coloured' boys while they were residents at the institution. These documents testify to the numerous processes whereby boys were fed, provided schooling and trade training, given religious instructions, taught personal hygiene, and shown how to work. These daily activities variously shaped the way in which

⁹⁸³ Goffman, E (1961), *Asylums, Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*, (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, p.11 and p.22)

⁹⁸⁴ Goffman (1961), p.17

each and every 'coloured' boy experienced life at the institution, as well as how they addressed 'life on the outside' upon release from Ottery.

It is the punishment regime of the Ottery institution that provides perhaps the best reflection of the contradictory nature and ambiguous form of life at Ottery. Provided below are a few examples of some of the experiences that shaped the lives of the nine informants during their stay at the Ottery institution. These experiences indicate the complex nature of survival at the 'correctional' institution, and were significant parts of the 'lessons' that they took with them upon release from the Ottery School of Industries.

Punishment and pain

Linda Chisholm has noted that much energy at 'correctional' institutions went into organising systems of control to structure discipline at the institution and prevent boys from escaping.⁹⁸⁵ Systems of control were normally developed in particular ways. One way of controlling the boys was by developing a division of labour and activity that ensured that boys were within sight of their supervisors, teachers and child-care minders, at all times. Another way of ensuring that boys did not escape from the institution was through instilling a deep fear of punishment. In this regard boys were harshly beaten for minor infringements such as disobedience, daydreaming, absent-mindedness and insolence. Given the hierarchical structure of control and discipline at the Ottery institution and the tremendous scope for brutality, perhaps the most effective way of controlling the boys however, was through the prefect system used at the institution. This system of placing boys in authority over others had profound effects on the lives of the nine informants. In this regard, the militarism and violence of the institutional regime at Ottery brutalised many of the boys that were sent there and elicited many contradictory responses.

Gasant Hendricks reflected in 1999 that he had quickly come to learn about the hierarchical structure of discipline at Ottery. On the one hand, it had taught him about the hardship and harshness that accompanied poverty, and that he had to

⁹⁸⁵ Chisholm (1989), pp.195-198

remain within the law at all times or risk severe punishment. On the other hand, it had taught him that even though “life was unfair sometimes, there were some things that just had to be accepted”.

You know, the principal and staff only really punished us when we did something wrong. I mean, if you run away from the school, what did you expect. I never ran away while I was at Ottery because I knew that I would be severely punished. I stuck to the rules at all times. But sometimes the teachers, they used to hit you for nothing. They were really hard on us, especially some of the ‘coloured’ teachers. But more than them, the prefects, they were simply dangerous, man. And they were very cruel. There was once when I was talking in the line outside the dining hall and a prefect came up from behind and kicked downwards with his foot. He may not have meant to, but he kicked with such force that he broke my ankle. And you know what, nothing happened to him. He was protected. That was the way he was expected to be and ordinary boys couldn’t question it.⁹⁸⁶

Pieter Botha related a similar experience where he was kicked in the face at the supper table for talking.

I was busy eating and was talking to the boy next to me. I heard the prefect say ‘quiet’ but I was talking very softly, so the next minute I looked up I only saw a boot. That guy kicked me in the face in full view of the teachers and instructors. And that’s not all. He dragged me from the table and kicked me so many times while I was lying on the floor.⁹⁸⁷

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Pieter reflected in 1999 that this experience had taught him to get revenge and that he had eventually exacted his revenge on the prefect. He noted that not only had his attack been carefully planned, but that he had meant to hurt the prefect as much as possible.

The first time, I said to myself, wow boeta, here you are going to have to fight. But you know, you couldn’t just fight there at Ottery. You could get seriously hurt or killed. So I planned my attack. A few of my friends at Ottery who had also come from the orphanage helped me. You see, we knew this prefect used to sneak out at night and visit shebeens in Parkwood. So one night we waited for him in the dark, behind the trees and as he and his

⁹⁸⁶ Interview 7, p.6 and p.14

⁹⁸⁷ Interview 6, pp.12-14; Walter Petersen spoke of the same incident in 1999, except that he was the Head prefect in charge that day and had simply witnessed the attack. He related the incident when he discussed how staff members turned a blind eye to prefect brutality. See Interview 5, pp.7-8

buddies came past, we hit them on the head with bricks. Ja, I got my own back.⁹⁸⁸

Ashley Golding reflected that his position at Ottery had been shaped by his physical strength. He noted that during leisure-time the instructors would frequently ‘teach the boys how to box’. “They would say it taught us discipline and was a way of getting rid of our excess anger”. Ashley asserted that boxing quickly became a site for the contest of power and control among the boys.

When you were summoned to the ring, you knew it was not for fun. The instructor used to say ‘come on the stage and hit each other’, but you knew when you went up there that you would have to hit hard or get hurt. I was a big boy by that time when I was summoned, and I gave that guy a hiding of his life. After that, the instructor (I think) recommended that I become a prefect. I eventually became head prefect and nobody messed with me again. After that I was in control of the boys, and I used it well to smokkel dagga (sell cannabis).⁹⁸⁹

Given the description of the prefects in relation to Pieter and Gasant, it came as something of a surprise to find that five of the informants consulted for the study were prefects during their stay at the Ottery institution. It was ‘surprising’ because the five informants were what would be described in layman terms presently as ‘success stories’. From discussions with the five informants however it became clear that at Ottery you could only ‘escape the madness’ by either keeping a low profile at the institution and accepting everything that happened there (and to you), or you became a prefect and worked within the system. William Petersen reflected that:

You know, I was just lucky. I became a prefect early on. I don’t know how they chose me, but most of the prefects were decent guys, that you could see came from respectable homes. But I tell you, after a while, good things get mixed up with bad things and you don’t know the difference anymore. In fact, after a while, you get to enjoy the bad things. There are things I did as a prefect that I am ashamed to talk about now, but then, it was okay because that was the way it was.⁹⁹⁰

⁹⁸⁸ Interview 6, p.14

⁹⁸⁹ Interview 1, p.3

⁹⁹⁰ Interview 5, p.17

Jerome Moses noted that he had ‘learnt the hard way’ at the Ottery institution and had suffered many beatings. He noted in 1999 that Ottery had taught him how to survive and that he had used these lessons to ‘make sense of life on the streets’.

You know, I first got beaten in the workshops. I’ve got the marks to show for it. That was the hard way to learn and when I became the ‘handlanger’ for my instructor, I used to do the same to the boys. If they were useless I made sure they knew. Then, I used to be beaten by the other boys. I waited my turn. When I became a prefect, well, I did what was required. I was known as one of the hard ones. If you didn’t listen to me, I would do the necessary because I was also fighting for a better standing at the institution. I adopted the policy that it is better to be hard and keep the boys in line, than cry afterwards. That’s the way I deal with my children too. It’s hard to get them back once they stray from the path. Just like now as a father, back then it was my neck as a prefect if things went wrong, so we did what we had to do.⁹⁹¹

Frank Adams was more self-critical when he related his term as a prefect at Ottery.

After I became a prefect I started learning things that always used to torment me afterwards. There was a time when Oubaas Hoppel didn’t like the way the boys were standing in the assembly line, so we started at one end and beat just about all the boys with sticks. I will always remember this because I wasn’t like that when I came to Ottery. I came from a good background. Anyway, on that day we were hitting these boys, and I hit a boy’s finger off. I’m serious, ‘mors-af’. That’s the kind of thing that Ottery did to me. But you must realise that when a boy gets to Ottery, you get one jersey for the whole winter and one pair of shorts. Only prefects got to wear long pants. Also, you had to be at the institution for one year before they gave you boots. At that time, it was just gravel roads, so you can imagine how wet, sore and blue your feet became in the winter. Ja, you can imagine why we all wanted to become prefects, if only to get some of the benefits. And like I said, as you went on, you became hard (even though you regretted hurting others).⁹⁹²

In conclusion, it is significant that the prefects were the foot soldiers of the staff at Ottery. When the staff went in search of absconders, they would use the prefects to act as their guides and ‘battering-rams’. Frank Adams reflected in 1999 that he had accompanied the search parties on many occasions and that he had witnessed some terrible incidents. Frank noted that the ‘white’ instructors were armed with revolvers at such times and that they did not hesitate to use their weapons.

⁹⁹¹ Interview 3, pp.5-6

⁹⁹² Interview 4a, p.7 and Interview 4b, pp.7-8

We were fairly big guys (prefects), so we would go along and when the instructors told us to break down doors, we'd put our shoulders in. On one occasion, I remember, we knew that a boy that had run away was inside a house in Elsie. When the woman wouldn't open the door the instructor simply opened fire. He killed her. And you know what, they called it an accident. The boy was taken back and only stayed at Ottery for six more months before being sent home. On another occasion we went into a man's house in Maitland and this runaway was standing on the cupboard. I'm telling you that guy skriked so big that he was like a statue. He stood like that for fifteen minutes not blinking an eye. He was so stiff we couldn't move him.⁹⁹³

Whether the incident related by Frank is true or not, is not relevant here. Rather, it indicates the nature and harshness of the punishment system of the Ottery institution. Frank reflected in 1999 that this 'brutal regime' was evident in a number of other activities. He described the methods used to extract the boys' teeth, and the extraneous physical education classes that they had to endure.

The boys would first all get injections to deaden their gums and then wait in another line to have their teeth extracted. The only problem was that because there was a couple of hundred boys, by the time they got to the dentist the anesthetic had worn off already. At such times, a couple of guys would just hold you down and he'd extract the teeth". The same thing happened when boys got syphilis. The staff wouldn't even ask how they contracted it. They would just hold you down and inject the antibiotic into your private parts. Also, once a month we had to do this PT session. The following day you couldn't walk, that was how hard that session was. They learnt how to do that in the Delta detention hostel at Ottery. Man, I tell you, if you were in Delta, you were in hell because there they worked your case. Early on, I stole a packet of sweets and was put in Delta for one day. I promised myself I would never go back there. You know, when I got to the army, their training was for babies compared to what we had to do at Ottery.⁹⁹⁴

Summing up

From the above three approaches it should be clear that the lives of 'coloured' boys were informed in different ways by the various factors associated with the social institution at Ottery. It is argued that the lives of 'coloured' boys were significantly shaped by the 'hidden curriculum' of the institution, as much as it was by the moral, trade and educational training that the boys received there. The narrative of the

⁹⁹³ Interview 4a, p.13

social institution at Ottery at that time might have been one of ‘reformation’, ‘rehabilitation’ and ‘salvation’ and ‘care’, but the reality of the ‘correctional’ regime profoundly influenced the lives of the ‘coloured’ boys thereafter. This is evident from the large number of boys who joined the military upon release from the Ottery institution in that period.

A gentle reminder

Notwithstanding the numerous physical and developmental problems encountered at the Ottery camp in early 1948, Principal Bester had envisaged that the institution would grow substantially thereafter. In a letter to the Secretary of Education in 1948 he had asked that adjoining grounds be incorporated into the Ottery camp.⁹⁹⁵ Bester asserted that the institution needed more land to incorporate a farming section on the camp, which could be used to both train boys who came from the rural areas⁹⁹⁶ in agricultural labour and also for the planting of fruits and vegetables for subsistence. The application was also informed by the notion that in order to ‘re-socialise’ ‘coloured’ boys at the Ottery camp, the institution needed to be ‘completely cut off’ from neighbouring ‘undesirable’ areas. For this purpose, (Bester claimed) the institution was required to be self-sufficient and autonomous.

In die opsig sal dit die skool om tot ‘n groot mate ook selfversorgend te word. Deur die aanplant van ‘n groentetuin en vrugteboom kan in daardie behoeftes van die leerlinge grotendeels op die terrein voorsien word. Deur lusern en ander voer te saai kan die inrigting sy eie melkkery opbou en ook in daardie opsig in sy behoeftes self voorsien. Die water wat vir die doel nodig sal wees kan ook deur boorgate gelewer word (*In this regard it will help the school to become largely independent. Through the planting of a vegetable garden and fruit trees, the needs of the boys can then largely be addressed on the grounds. By growing lucerne and other foods, the*

⁹⁹⁴ Interview 4b, p.20

⁹⁹⁵ Bester noted in 1948 that “daar word vir die Ottery Nywerheidskool groot uitbreiding in die vooruitsig gestel .” Ottery Archive (OSIA), Ref:108/28/3, ‘Notule Raadvergaderinge 1948-1974’ , “Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Ottery dated 9/12/1948”

⁹⁹⁶ In this regard Bester asserted at the time that larger grounds would not only provide the ‘space’ to ‘teach the boys how to work’, but that the neglect of farming activities would necessitate boys from rural areas being trained for trades that they had no use for. Bester argued that this would subsequently lead to the rural boys either not using their trade trading upon being released from the institution, or they would remain in Cape Town. Both scenarios were deemed to be unacceptable. See CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/11, Part 1, letter from Principal Bester to the Secretary of Education dated 4/2/1948

*institution can also build up its own dairy and thus see to its needs in this way too. Whatever water is needed can be acquired through boreholes).*⁹⁹⁷

It is necessary to point out here that the request to incorporate a farming section was only approved in 1955. In fact, it was only by 1955 when enough progress had been made in the construction of the school buildings, hostels, many roads and the sports fields on the camp, that the institution could be ‘formally’ referred to a school of industries. By that time, there were 540 boys at the facility.⁹⁹⁸

*Die bedoeling is dat op die wyse leerlinge op Saterdag en op vakansiedae met plaaswerk besig gehou kan word terwyl die onderneming terselfdertyd groente sal oplewer wat die skool se uitgawes aan voeding sal verminder. Die onderneming is goedgekeur deur die Departement en sal eers op ‘n klein skaal begin (The idea of a farming section is that in this way pupils can be kept busy on Saturdays and other holidays. At the same time the project will provide the institution with vegetables which will reduce the costs presently allocated to the purchase thereof. The project has been approved by the Department and will initially be implemented on a limited scale.)*⁹⁹⁹

It is also significant that in 1958 the administration and control of the institution was transferred to the Department of Coloured Affairs. This was an important development for the institution, for while it may have started a process whereby the appointment of ‘coloured’ practitioners were preferred, it also led to a notable reduction in the funds that was made available to the institution.

4. Concluding remarks

The nature and form of the provision of institutional care for ‘coloured’ boys in the period 1938 to 1970 is a neglected theme in debates about crime, welfare, education and special needs facilities in South Africa. Was the institutional programme at Ottery about moral training, training for work, welfare relief, or ‘correctional’ supervision? It is a complex question and requires much analysis. The approaches that are taken or the opinions that are preferred as to the nature and role of the

⁹⁹⁷ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.125, Ref:79/2/11, Part 1, letter from Principal Bester to the Secretary of Education dated 4/2/1948

⁹⁹⁸ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.124, Ref:79/2/3/2, “Jaarverslag oor Werksaamhede van Ottery Nywerheidskool in 1954, p.21

⁹⁹⁹ CA, TBK KUS, Vol.124, Ref:79/2/3/2, “Jaarverslag oor Werksaamhede van Ottery Nywerheidskool in 1954, p.43

institution in the lives of ‘coloured’ boys in the period 1948-1970 will always be different. However, the observations made below by some of the informants of their stay at the Ottery institution during that period should perhaps serve as a constant reminder that sometimes poverty and need are about very simple but limited choices.

For example, Gasant Hendricks reflected in 1999 that the Ottery School of Industries had provided a shelter for him at a very important stage of his life when so many things could have gone wrong. He asserted that the vibrant and lively environment of living among six to seven hundred boys had developed camaraderie among them that he still held in his heart to this day.

There at Ottery we got food, care and shelter. And the other boys, they became my family. We would regularly stand on the corners and stoeps and sing ‘kaapseliedjies’ and share our ‘goodies’. My sister used to bring us apples and sweets and we used to put into a booty with the other boys and share. No, that time, Ottery was alive and though it was hard sometimes, I always think of the kids of the streets and how I might've been there. We played soccer, played movies, had concerts and sports days. Those things I didn't get anywhere else.¹⁰⁰⁰

Ashley Golding reflected in 1999 that unlike other ‘normal’ boys at the institution, he had basically been an ‘orphan boy’ when he got to Ottery and that he had always regarded the Ottery School of Industries as his home.

When I first got there, I was scared stiff. I knew no one and it was a big and harsh place. But after a while I began to cope. With me, it was like, you know, I was an orphan boy, so what's the use of crying about it. I made Ottery my home because it was all I knew. But Ottery also taught me that I didn't want to ever be in places like that again. I used to tell my children that all the time as they grew up.¹⁰⁰¹

Jerome Moses noted that every time he asked himself what he was doing at the Ottery School of Industries he reminded himself that things could have been far worse.

You know, I used to tell myself, ‘where can I go anyway?’ Who was going to take care of me, look after me, and feed me? Where would I be today if I

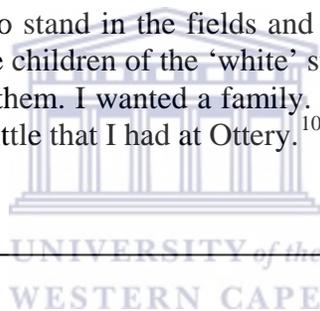
¹⁰⁰⁰ Interview 7, pp.16-19

¹⁰⁰¹ Interview 1, pp.4-7

wasn't taken in at Ottery? A vagrant? I was grateful for what I got at that time, so I just did my time at Ottery and waited until I was eighteen, until I could be released, to get on with my life.¹⁰⁰²

Finally, Pieter Botha reflected in September 1999 that the harshness of institutional life made him realise very quickly that particular choices had to be made and that many lessons had to be learnt. Pieter reflected in 1999 that the staff treated him differently because he “knew what he was doing and worked well with his hands”. He was also very dependable. Pieter noted however that he still had to live in the hostels with the other boys. There he was treated like any other boy, and there he learned what it was like to be alone and poor. Pieter asserted that institutional care was all about ‘accepting’ and ‘living with what you had’.

You know, at Ottery you got your good and your bad, but its everywhere like that, isn't it? There comes a time in your life when you must stand up and fight for what you want. I learnt that there. But I'll always remember that time when I used to stand in the fields and look after the cows. That day, I stood looking at the children of the ‘white’ staff playing happily together and laughing. I envied them. I wanted a family. That made me strong and made me appreciate the little that I had at Ottery.¹⁰⁰³



¹⁰⁰² Interview 3, pp.1, 5 and 9

¹⁰⁰³ Interview 6, pp.16-17

Conclusion

The task of writing a history of an institution established specifically for ‘coloured’ boys in 1948 has been a particularly arduous one, simply because the history of provision for ‘coloured’ boys needed to be understood in relation to the type of social institution that was being provided. This exercise was further complicated by the way in which the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries straddled two distinct periods in the history of South Africa. The main organising questions that guided the author throughout the project were then firstly why a ‘correctional’ institution was provided for ‘coloured’ boys in 1948, and secondly, what it was about ‘colouredness’ that informed the provision of a school of industries?

These two questions represented the obvious ways of interpreting the project. Notably however, the initial conceptualisation of the project was also informed by the author’s preconceptions about the Ottery School of Industries. These preconceptions were derived from living on the Cape Flats all his life and internalising much of the mythology associated with the institution.

In this regard, the author was reminded of an incident in his primary school days when his best friend Sean was supposed to have been sent to Ottery after having been struck on the head with an axe. Sean’s father had apparently hit him on the head while in a drunken stupor. After inquiring why Sean had not attended school for three weeks, Sean’s classmates were informed that he had been removed from the care of his parents and transferred to a place called Ottery. At that time Sean’s removal was presented as ‘positive intervention’. When Sean returned to school two weeks later, he noted that the magistrate had agreed to not send him to Ottery on condition that his father be ‘sent away’ to a ‘clinic for drunks’.

Later on, as a soccer player growing up on the Cape Flats, the author came to perceive the Ottery institution as ‘a school for naughty and stupid boys’ and where ‘coloured’ boys were sent when they needed to be ‘reconditioned’. Ottery was the

place where boys played barefeet on gravel football pitches, where boys got up at dawn to perform military-type exercises, and where boys were 'conditioned' to 'succeed at all costs' even if that meant breaking their opponents legs. When asked to play in a league game against an Ottery soccer team, the author feigned injury for fear of being hurt and humiliated. These fears were reinforced when the Ottery team won 12-1.

The two 'experiences' related above may be limited and isolated incidents, but it does represent the complex ways in which the role of Ottery is conceptualised by all people previously referred to as 'coloured' living on the Cape Flats. For example, when explaining the research topic to a colleague, he noted that he had once been taken on a visit to Ottery in his adolescent days to demonstrate what happens 'when boys don't listen'. Apparently he had been 'very wild' in his adolescent years and was warned by his parents that they would send him to Ottery if he continued to be uncontrollable. At that time Rashied was neither delinquent nor could he be categorised as indigent.

Ask any resident on the Cape Flats about the Ottery institution and they will probably answer, 'oh that school for stoute (naughty) boys'. But ask them where the institution is located, what it is that the institution does or whether they know anybody at the institution, they will in all probability not provide such a spontaneous answer. Being poor or 'in need' on the Cape Flats has always been regarded as an unwanted 'condition'. As a young boy on the Flats, it was always understood that you avoided being sent to Ottery by 'not being poor' and by going to school regularly. In this regard, while the Ottery School of Industries may have been conceived in the late 1940s mainly as an institution for indigent 'coloured' boys that required state care, the institution does seem to have served a number of other roles. These roles were shaped and reshaped not only by what was understood as 'coloured' at that time, but also what the institution was perceived to provide. In this regard, the Ottery institution was thought to provide:

- a) Trade training for poor 'coloured' boys who were not succeeding at academic schooling and so could provide them with access to labour when they became adults;
- b) Residential care for maltreated and neglected indigent boys;
- c) 'Moral training' for boys deemed to display anti-social tendencies; and
- d) Educative opportunities for boys that were generally poorly schooled or unschooled.

What about 'colouredness'

Union Education Department officials from 1948 had increasingly asserted that the 'biological proneness' of 'coloured' boys to break the law required that special measures be adopted in addressing their needs. At that time the Union Government argued that the provision of 'large training camps' was perhaps the ideal way of dealing with the needs of indigent 'coloured' boys. In this regard, the establishment of the Ottery facility was informed by the particular ideas and processes that had come to shape the ways in which the Union Government addressed the needs of indigent children by that time. The first two sections of the thesis thus sought to provide the reader with a wide background of the period before 1948. It was argued in Section A that a complex grid of historical forces informed the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries in 1948. These forces emerged at a time when both the Union Education Department and the Union Welfare Department were battling to reconfigure the basis of welfare and educational provision in South Africa.

The establishment of the Ottery facility was shown to be a significant 'advance' on the social institutions that had been provided previously. It was noted that the establishment of the institution was an aspect of the welfare and social democratic pre-occupations of the United Party government in the period after the Second World War. Before 1948 'coloured' indigent and pre-delinquent boys had readily been sent to Porter Reformatory, Pollsmoor Prison or were apprenticed to farmers (referred to as indenture labour). The establishment of the Ottery School of Industries was thus cast as a way of 'saving' 'coloured' boys from being 'contaminated' at Porter Reformatory or at Pollsmoor Prison.

The Ottery facility was also envisaged as a place where the Union Government could provide sanctuary for 'coloured' boys who were being ravaged by poor social conditions within 'coloured' communities and family homes at that time. In this regard it was argued that by providing 'coloured' boys with access to schooling, trade training and disciplined living conditions, the boys could be 'reconditioned' and 'saved' from future lives of crime. 'Conditions' like the 'undesirable housing environments' of the 'coloured' population at that time, the previous 'convictions' of any one parent, the nature of the parental bond (if a child's parents were married), the economic level of the family, whether both parents worked or were willing to work, and even simple things like whether the parents of a 'coloured' child 'got along', were used at that time to inform whether a child was institutionalised or not. These assumptions were derived in that period from a particular knowledge-base of what 'coloured' was deemed to represent. There were four images that somehow served to represent 'colouredness' at that time, and which informed the institutionalisation of 'coloured' boys. These 'images' suggested that:

- 1) 'Coloureds' needed to be saved from themselves, poor social conditions and from 'racial mixing' with 'natives';
- 2) 'Coloureds' were inherently criminogenic;
- 3) The coloured family was 'unstable' and 'dangerous' and required regulation;
- 3) 'Coloureds' needed to be taught how to work.

The type of 'correctional' provision that was provided for indigent and 'in need of care' 'coloured' boys was then informed by the ways in which ideas about indigency, work preparedness, and 'race deterioration' had been fused by 1948 with notions of punishment in the South African context.

What services were provided?

At that time idioms like ‘moral reform’, ‘work training’, ‘corrective residential care’, and ‘educative rehabilitation’ served to provide ‘correctional’ institutionalism with a sense of purpose and justification. These idioms also formed a vital part of the language of social reform at that time. This language was firmly located in the social realm where it was informed by varying ideas on religion, social reform and the power of education. In this way, the terms served as ‘useful bridges’ between the purported aims of social policies and the ways in which these policies were understood in practice. In this regard, Section B provided four analyses that tried to understand the ways in which ideas and processes in various policy and academic realms came to provide the content for these idioms, which subsequently came to explain what it was that the Ottery School of Industries did.

It is notable that the type of trade training provided at the Ottery School of Industries after 1948 was significantly defined by the limited availability of trade training institutions for ‘coloured’ boys by that time. Trade training at Ottery was understood mainly as training for manual work. However, when addressed in relation to the poverty-stricken circumstances of children deemed to be ‘in need of care’, childcare practitioners more often than not advised boys to attend Ottery. They noted that the boys at best would acquire a trade skill that they could use to find useful employment when they turned eighteen years old. At worst, they would be provided with shelter and ‘moral training’ that would ensure that they did not lead ‘lives of crime’ upon release from the institution.

These motivations were particularly evident in the narrative in Section C that described the nature of the institutionalisation of ‘coloured’ boys in the period 1948 to 1970. It was argued there that the ‘correctional’ regime of Ottery informed the lives of ‘coloured’ boys upon their release from state care in significant ways. However, it was the type of trade training, academic schooling and residential care that the various boys received at Ottery that fundamentally shaped both their lives at the institution and in the social realm after their release. In this regard, it is notable

that the various programmes at Ottery and the ideas that underlay them served to legitimise ‘correctional’ institutionalism at that time.

Section C thus not only provided the main core of the thesis, but it also served to graphically illustrate the ways and extent to which the ideas, processes and historical forces noted in Section A and B meshed in complex and ambiguous ways in the period after the Second World War, to inform the lives of ‘coloured’ indigent boys.

‘Correctional’ institutions in the twenty-first century

The contemporary period in South Africa has become one in which the optimistic belief in notions of ‘reformation’ has given way to a persistent pessimism about the rationality and efficacy of modern penal and ‘correctional’ institutions. More and more criminologists, penologists and other social scientists seem to argue that previous methods of addressing aspects of social order such as imprisonment and welfarist institutionalisation are ‘irrational’, ‘dysfunctional’, ‘too expensive’ or simply counter-productive.¹⁰⁰⁴

Like the social problems that it was supposed to deal with, ‘correctional’ institutionalism is nowadays seen as a chronic social problem. Part of the problem has been the inability of these institutions to explain away their existence. Are these institutions concerned with moral training, training for work, welfare relief, or ‘correctional punishment’? In this regard, terms that have long served to provide penal practice with a sense of purpose and justification have suddenly lost their ‘validity’. Whereas terms like ‘rehabilitation’ and ‘correctional supervision’ have for much of this century in South Africa been key elements of official ideology and institutional rhetoric, these terms no longer appear to be either ‘meaningful’ or ‘worthwhile’ for its various audiences. Garland has noted for Britain that this “talismatic reference-point is no longer unifying nor uplifting. The notion of rehabilitation has come to seem problematic at best, and unworkable and dangerous

¹⁰⁰⁴ Garland (1990a), p.4

at worst".¹⁰⁰⁵ In encapsulating both the desire to punish and control¹⁰⁰⁶ and to explore the 'best' ways of re-integrating those deemed to be 'maladjusted', it would seem that the 'rehabilitative' ideal of 'correctional' institutionalism in South Africa has finally outlived its metaphorical value.

This development has occurred alongside the re-emergence of moral arguments that purport that punitive (as opposed to 'correctional') measures can be a proper and defensible way of dealing with crime and delinquency. This form of thinking has been markedly absent from most of the twentieth century discourse on issues related to social order. Penal debates in the twenty-first century globally and in South Africa seem to have returned instead to basic moral and organisational questions. However, without a new 'vocabulary', much of these discussions have tended to look back to the period immediately before the modern penal era and have sought to 'return' children to their homes in this way.

Contemporary proponents of the 'justice' model or of 'general deterrence' have revived the liberal discourse of eighteenth century jurisprudence, raising basic questions about the right to punish, the limits of state power, the responsibility and dignity of the offender, the nature of criminality, the depiction of human nature and so on. There have also been important attempts to reintroduce questions that had previously been silenced by institutional operations such as the role of the victim, and of the responsibilities of the community in causing and preventing criminality.¹⁰⁰⁷

In South Africa since 1994 the ANC government have asked notable questions about whether there can be a technical institutional solution for the social problems of crime and deviance. Increasingly, specialists have claimed however that the problems of youth deviancy need to be addressed within and by individual communities. This assertion sounds remarkably similar to arguments made in debates of the 1940s in which it was asserted that communities needed to be separated and provided with the infrastructure to deal with their 'own problems'. Only in the 2000s communities are not being provided with state funds or

¹⁰⁰⁵ Garland (1990a), p.6

¹⁰⁰⁶ Pratt, J (1992), *Punishment in a Perfect Society: The New Zealand Penal System 1840-1939*, (Wellington, Victoria University Press, pp.244-248)

infrastructures to address issues of social stability. Stanley Cohen has noted that in recent years this shift, referred to as ‘destructuring’, has been characterised by a move away from the state (deregulation and decentralisation), from the ‘expert’ (deprofessionalisation, anti-psychiatry), from the institution (normalisation, decarceration, community care) and away from the individual (back to justice, human rights, community focus).¹⁰⁰⁸ These trends reflect ideas steeply informed by the dominant neo-liberal policies of the contemporary period.



¹⁰⁰⁷ Garland (1990a), p.8

¹⁰⁰⁸ Cohen, S (1986), *Visions of Social Control*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, p.37)

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D. Interviews

(The names of informants who were previously pupils at Ottery School of Industries have been changed to protect their identities)

The following informants contributed to the study:

1. Ashley Golding on 26 June 1999
 2. Lourens Marcus on 14 July 1999 and 25 August 1999
 3. Jerome Moses on 22 August 1999
 4. Frank Adams on 22 June 1999 and 17 July 1999
 5. Walter Petersen on 17 July 1999
 6. Pieter Botha on 20 July 1999
 7. Gasant Hendricks on 7 July 1999
 8. Anwar/Gregory Le Roux on 29 July 1999
 9. Sedick Edwards on 22 May 1999 and 31 August 1999
 10. Dr. FA Bester, first principal of the Ottery School of Industries, on 5 May 1996, 22 September 1997 and 6 February 1999
 11. Dr. JC Carstens, second principal of the Ottery School of Industries, on 11 September 1998 and 22 March 1999
 12. Mrs Emily Filander, matron at Ottery School of Industries from November 1948 till May 1988, on 23 September 1998
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