

THE ALEXANDRA ACCORD

Community Newsletter

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A COMMUNICATION FROM THE ALEXANDRA JOINT NEGOTIATING FORUM

THE JOINT NEGOTIATING FORUM



THE ALEXANDRA CIVIC ORGANISATION



Dear Residents.

The Transvaal Provincial Administration, the Alexandra Civic Organisation and the Alexandra City Council have signed an agreement called the Alexandra Accord. This agreement commits the parties to the development of Alexandra and ends the rent and services boycott.

The Alexandra Accord also sets up a Joint Negotiating Forum (JNF) to find ways to solve the problems in Alexandra.

The other members of the JNF are: the Central Witwatersrand Regional Services Council, the Sandton Town Council, the Randburg Town Council, Eskom, the Rand Water Board and the Development Bank of Southern Africa.

This book explains the story behind the Accord and gives the residents of Alexandra information about the JNF.

We hope that you will share this publication with other residents, discuss it with your friends and read it to those who cannot read.

VIVA ALEXANDRA!

Greetings to all residents in Alexandra.

The Alexandra Civic Organisation (ACO) is committed to making Alexandra a better place for all residents. ACO wants Alexandra to be a place where all can live peacefully.

For the past six months we have been involved in negotiations about the future of Alexandra. This year, on 27 February, we signed the Alexandra Accord with the Government. This Accord is an agreement to deal with many of the problems facing Alexandra: land, housing and services such as water, sewerage and electricity.

The residents of Alexandra will have the opportunity to discuss these issues and put forward suggestions about the future of Alexandra. ACO will call meetings in all areas so that residents can participate in decisions about the future.

The Alexandra Accord is for all the residents of Alexandra. Use this book to debate these issues in the yard, street and area committees.

If you have any questions about this book, please contact the ACO offices at Ganda Shopping Centre, 1st Avenue, Wynberg.

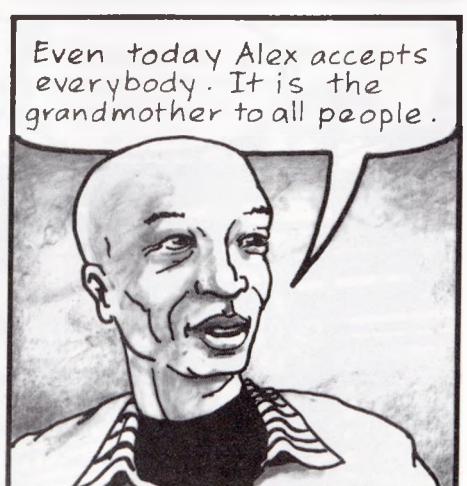
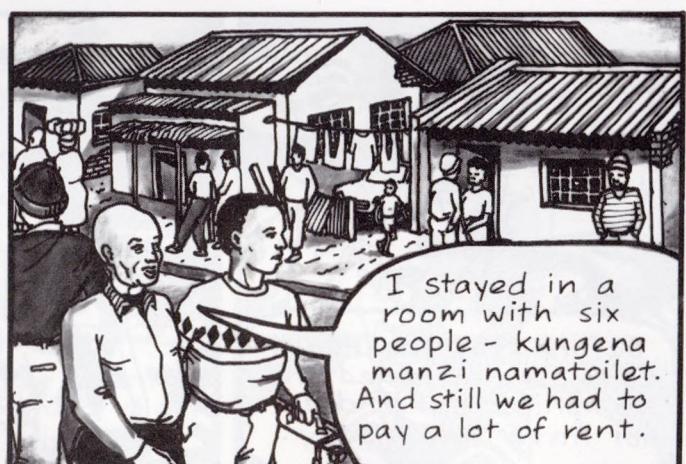
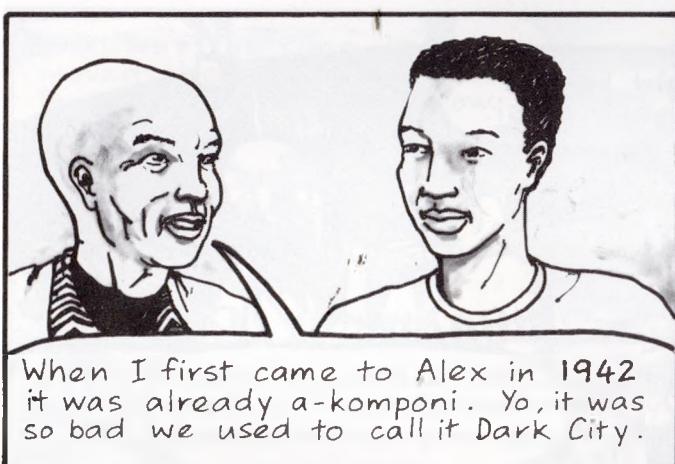
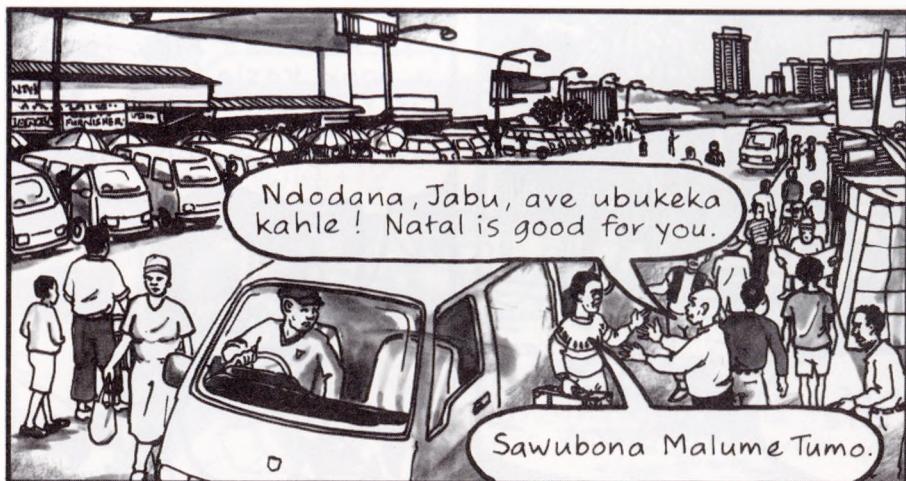
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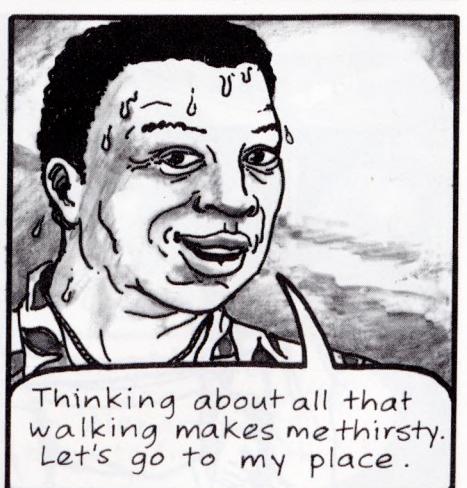
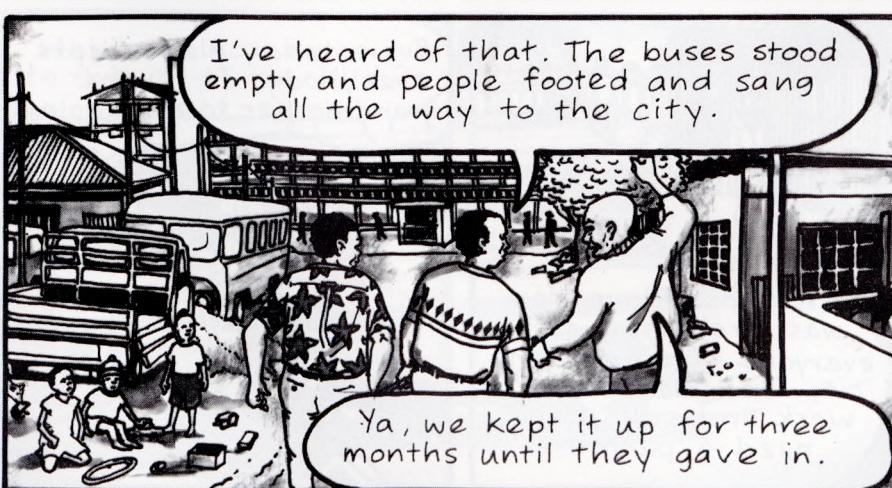
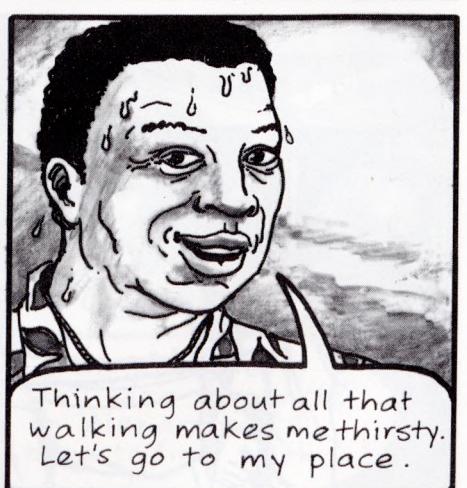
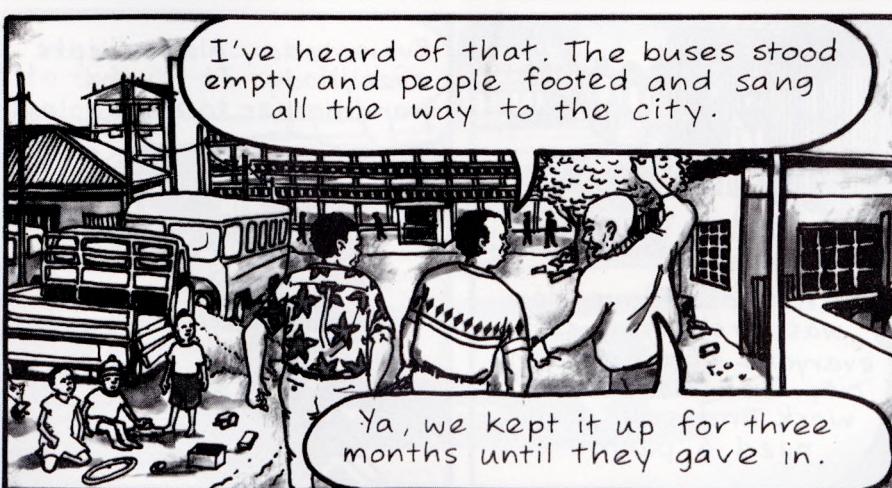
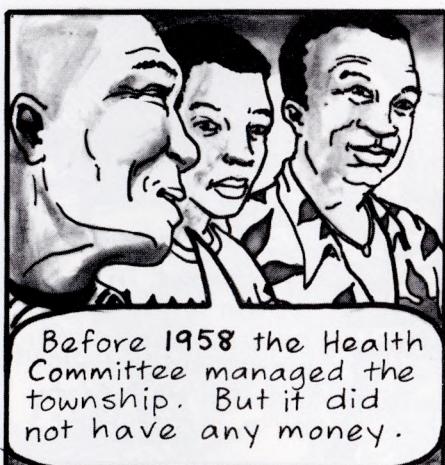
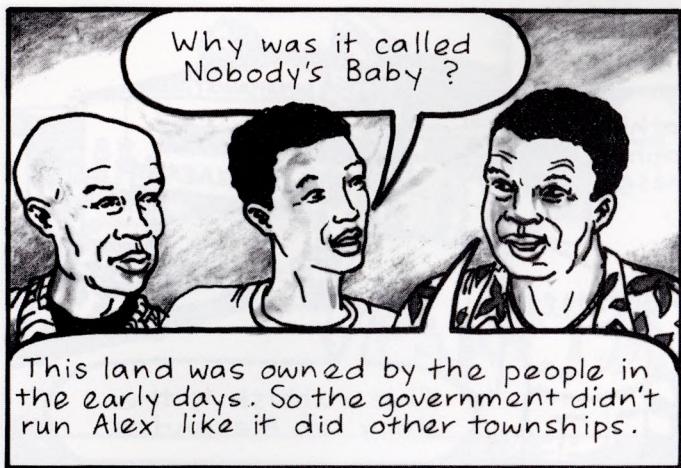
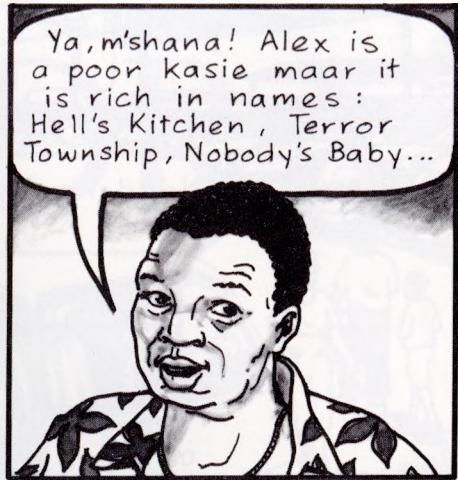
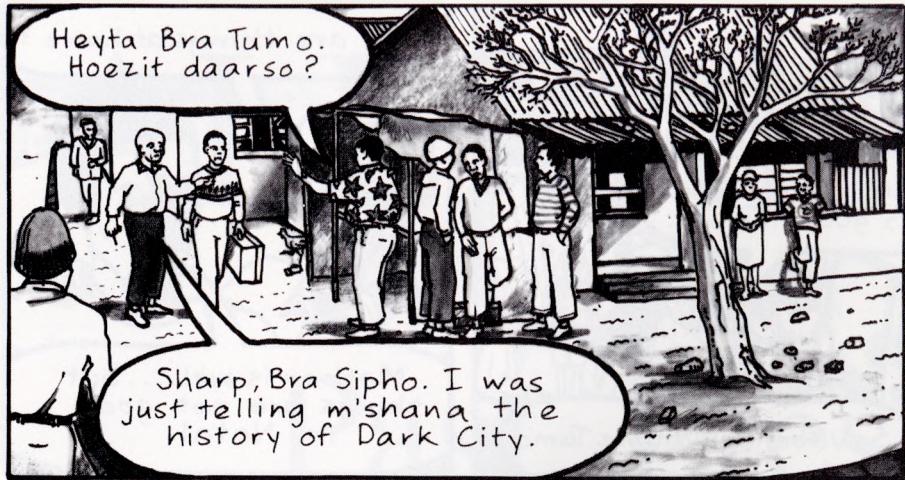
ALEXANDRA

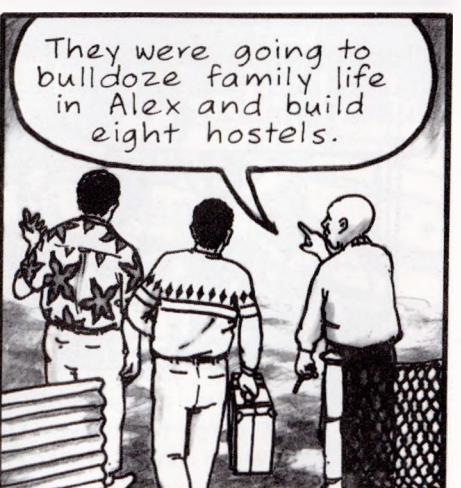
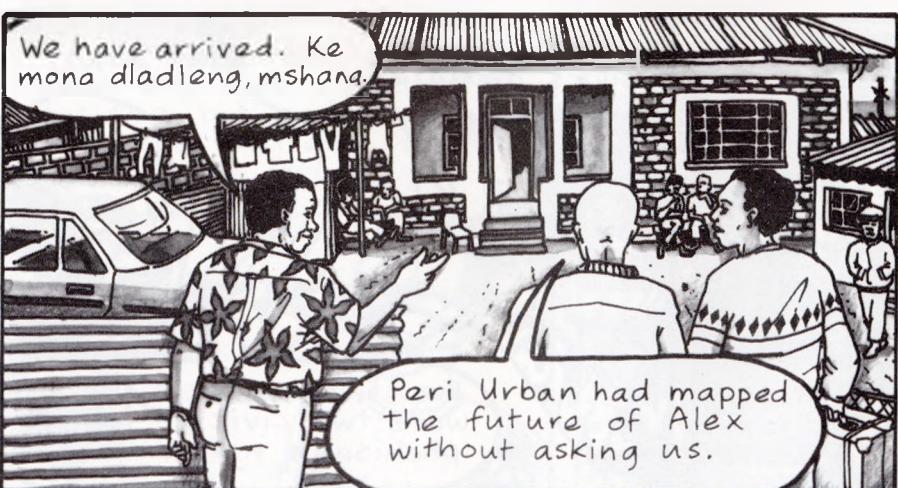
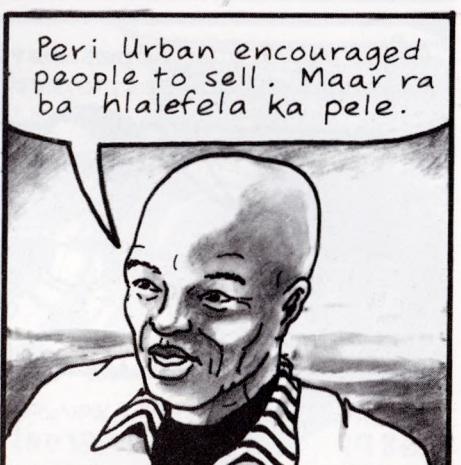
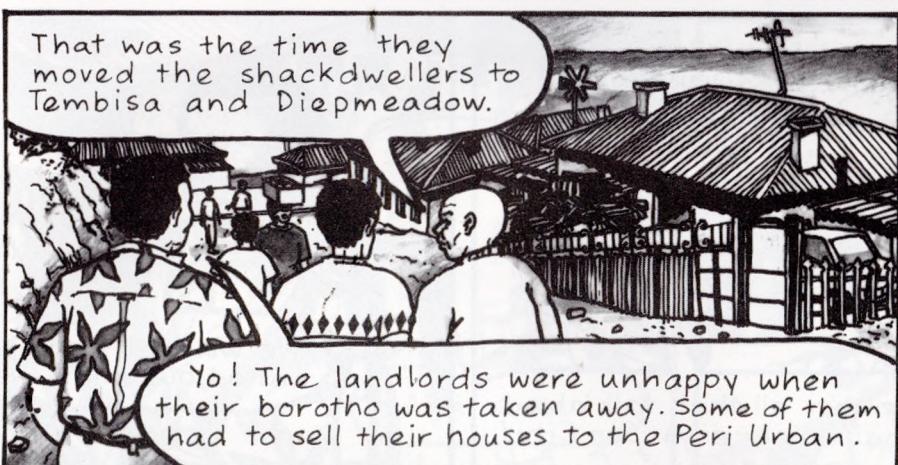
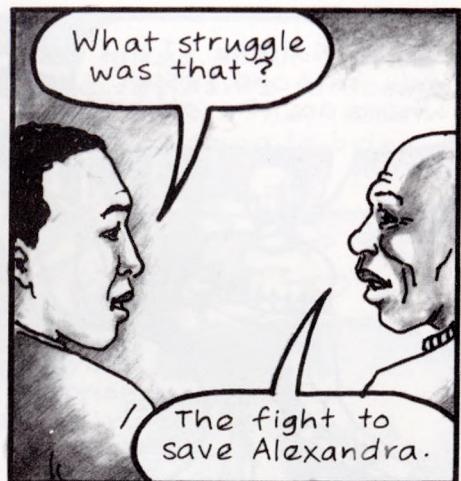
Past, Present and Future.

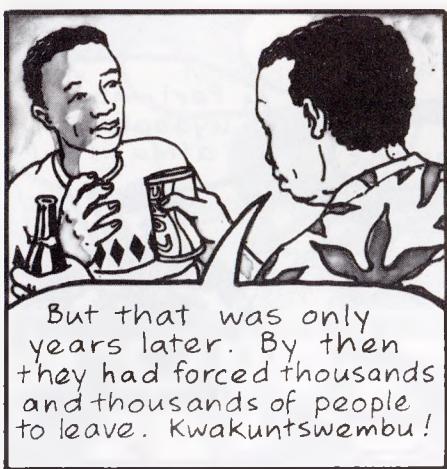
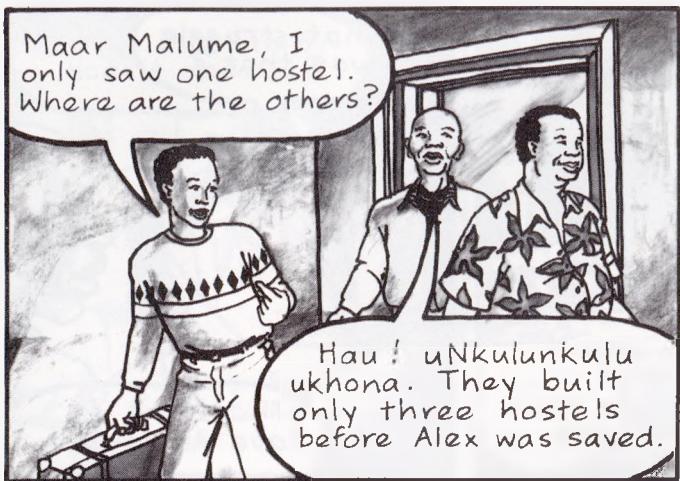
PART 1: Looking Back











Ya, this civic thing only made sense to me after 1986. That was when the comrades from the Action Committee visited all the houses.



They talked about uniting all the residents to form one big civic. They said they were going to bring people's power to Alex.



Ya! Ke a hopola, mfo. The rent boycott started, the council resigned, and then the army moved in...



And that was the end of the Action Committee and their people's power.

Ya, we heard about the Alex treason trial...



Ei, Ma Tumo! There's going to be a treason trial at home!



Give isponono sami my love.

Aga suka!



Ba phile soft da'so, maan... is that part of Alex?

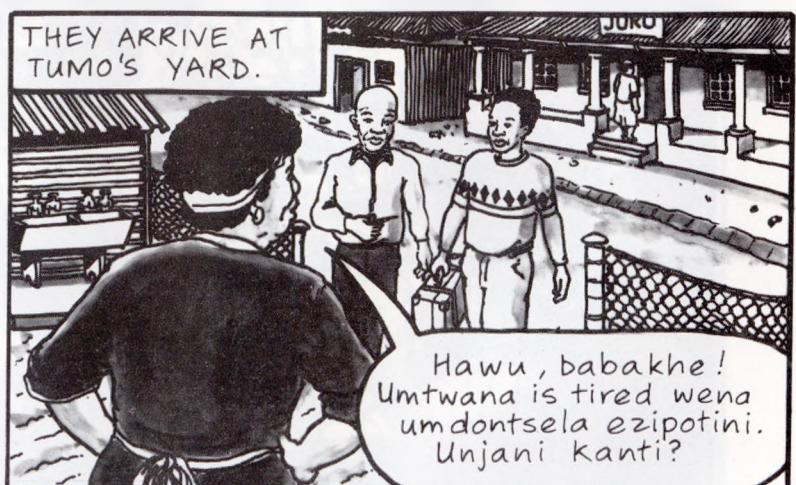
That's the East Bank. Those houses were built after 1986.



There have been some good changes since 1986. But the big problem remains. We need houses which people can afford.



THEY ARRIVE AT TUMO'S YARD.

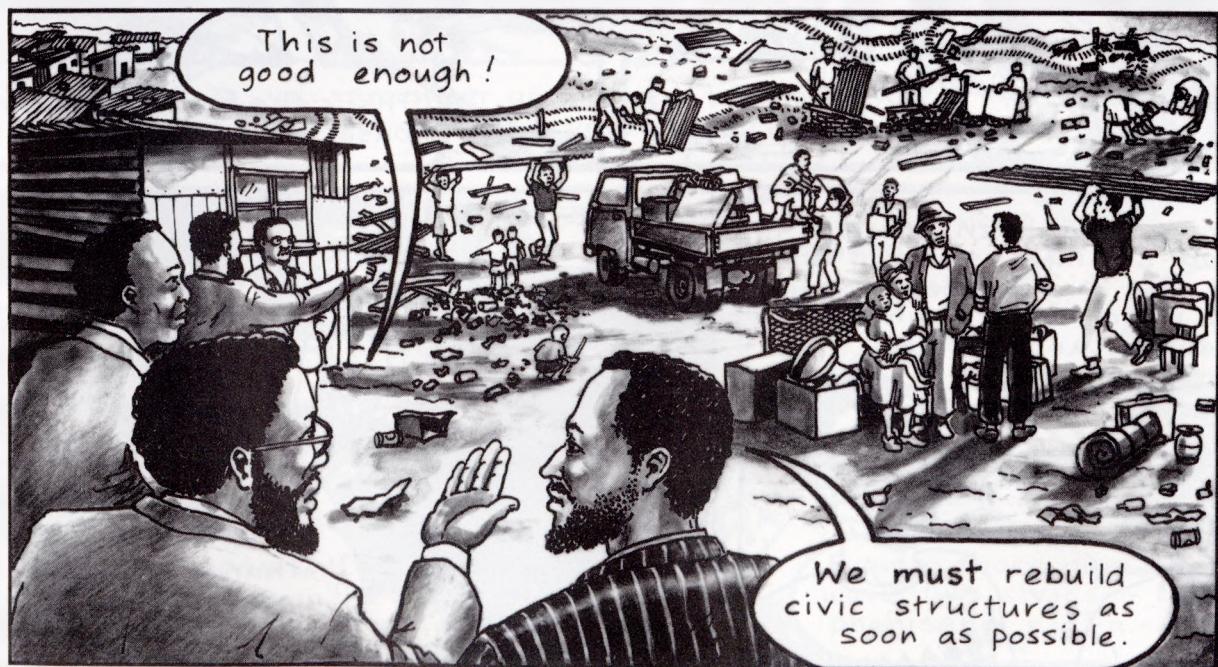


Hawu, babakhe! Umtwana is tired wena umdantsela ezipotini. Unjani Kanti?

THE STORY OF THE ACCORD

On the 24th of April 1989 the court found that the Alexandra Action Committee (AAC) had been trying to solve the problems of Alexandra, not trying to make Alexandra ungovernable.

The five leaders of the civic were set free: Moses Mayekiso, Richard Mdakane, Obed Bapela, Mzwanele Mayekiso and Paul Tshabalala.



During the next few months the civic started to rebuild its structures.

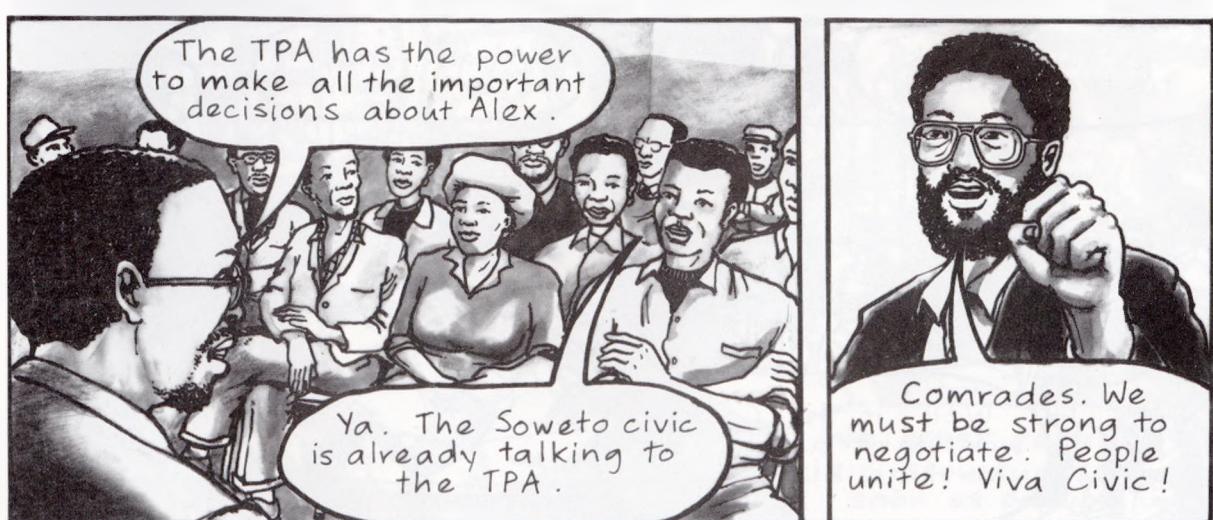
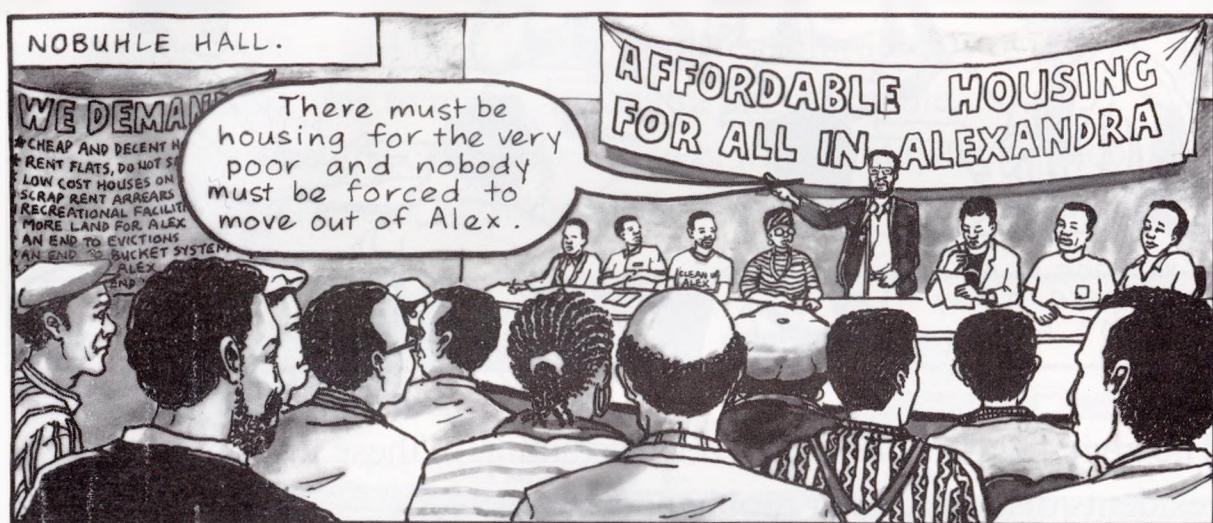


The civic held meetings all over Alexandra. In these meetings residents discussed their problems.



THE LAUNCH OF ACO

In December 1989 a central committee meeting was held to launch the Alexandra Civic Organisation (ACO). The civic elected an executive committee.



ACO'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In early 1990 ACO sent a letter to the TPA asking for a meeting. At the same time ACO started making its own plan for the development of Alexandra. The civic asked an organisation called PLANACT to help them.

ACO and PLANACT held meetings to look at solutions to the problems of Alexandra.



The meetings with PLANACT made it clear that the solution does not lie in Alexandra alone. The days of separate development are over. There must be one local authority for Alexandra, Sandton and the other white suburbs in the area.

THE JOINT NEGOTIATING FORUM

In August 1990 the TPA and the Alexandra City Council agreed to meet with ACO to discuss the problems of Alexandra.

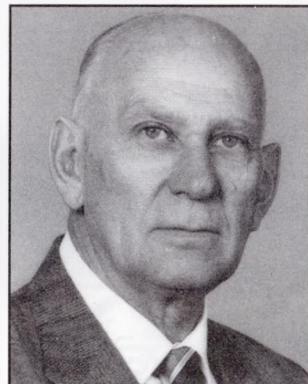
The TPA and ACO could not agree on the role of the Council. ACO said that the Council was part of the TPA, but the TPA insisted that the Council was an independent party. Eventually it was agreed that the Council be a party to the negotiations.

However, both the TPA and ACO did agree that negotiations should involve other important parties. They decided to form a negotiating body, called the Joint Negotiating Forum (JNF), to do something about the future of Alexandra.

WHO ARE THE OTHER PARTIES ON THE JNF?

The Regional Services Council

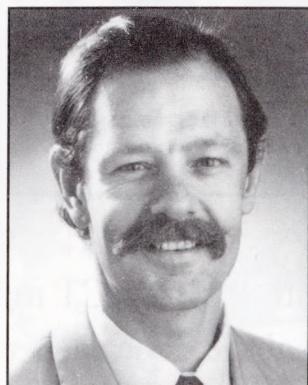
The Central Witwatersrand Regional Services Council is a government body which gets taxes from businesses in the Witwatersrand. It uses this money to upgrade townships like Soweto and Alexandra.



Our goal is the upgrading and provision of infrastructure and essential services to enhance the quality of life of the residents.

The Sandton Town Council

The Sandton Town Council is the local authority for Sandton. It includes the industrial areas around Alexandra.



The JNF is a useful forum to start talking about future local government structures.

ESKOM

Eskom makes and sells electricity to local authorities all over South Africa. Eskom wants to improve the electricity system in Alexandra.



We believe the JNF can bring different groups together to improve services to the community.

The Randburg Town Council

Many residents of Alexandra work in Randburg. The Randburg Town Council is therefore pleased to be able to help provide services to Alexandra.



Together we must identify the needs of the people and find solutions to these problems.

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The Development Bank

The Development Bank of Southern Africa provides loans and technical assistance for projects which improve the quality of life of poor people in urban and rural areas in southern Africa.



We need recognised institutions to implement development projects and we support the JNF to facilitate this.

The Rand Water Board

The Rand Water Board supplies clean water that is safe to use and drink to people living in Alexandra and to the whole of the PWV area.



Water is a necessity of life and we are involved in the JNF to ensure that water is available to all of Alexandra's residents.

THE NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN

In October 1990 ACO presented its proposals for the future development of Alexandra at a meeting of the JNF.

HOUSING

- ◆ The residents of Alexandra should not have to pay the money they owe for rent and services.
- ◆ People who rent houses should be able to own these houses.
- ◆ Low cost houses must be built.
- ◆ The hostels must be upgraded.

LAND

- ◆ Land on the Far East Bank must be developed with the participation of the people of Alexandra.
- ◆ More land must be made available close to Alexandra.

SERVICES

- ◆ Services such as water, sewerage and rubbish removal must be upgraded and must be well maintained.
- ◆ Services must be affordable enough for everybody.

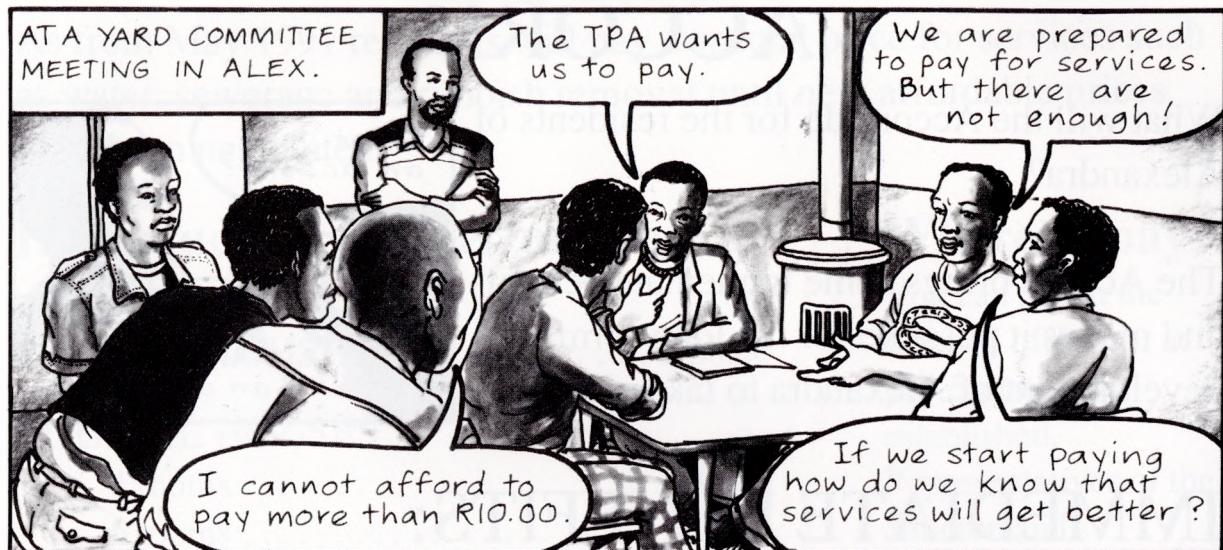
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- ◆ There must be one local authority for Alexandra, Sandton and the other white suburbs in the area.
- ◆ This authority must have enough money to run the area properly.



ENDING THE BOYCOTT

ACO held discussions with the residents of Alexandra about ending the rent boycott.



ACO went back to the JNF to negotiate the payment of a special price for rent and services.



On 27th February 1991 the TPA, ACO and the Alexandra City Council signed the Alexandra Accord. The rent boycott had been successful.

At last the government was listening to the needs of the people.



THE ALEXANDRA ACCORD

What will the Accord do for the residents of Alexandra?

The Accord brings some immediate benefits and makes it possible for the long-term development of Alexandra to take place.



IMMEDIATE BENEFITS:

- ◆ The rent arrears have been written off. You no longer owe this money.
- ◆ You will pay special interim prices for services such as water, sewerage and rubbish removal.
- ◆ The RSC has given R3 million:
 - to improve the water system in the hostels.
 - to remove the rubbish.
 - to upgrade the bucket system.
 - to provide water and toilets to the shack areas.
 - to improve the electricity system.





SPECIAL SERVICE CHARGES:

As from May 1991 residents will pay a special price for services such as water, sewerage and rubbish removal until new affordable prices have been negotiated.

How much to pay per month:

PRIVATE HOUSES R50.00

COUNCIL HOUSES

4 rooms R30.00
6 rooms R40.00

PRIVATE OR COUNCIL FLATS

Bachelor flat R40.00
2 bedroom flat R50.00
3 bedroom flat R60.00

COUNCIL ROOMS

1 room R10.00
2 room R15.00
3 room R20.00
4 room R25.00
5 room R30.00
6 room R35.00
Each extra room costs R5.00

HOSTELS

bed in 8-bed room R23.00
bed in 6-bed room R25.00
bed in 4-bed room R27.00
bed in 2-bed room R30.00
bed in 1-bed room R30.00

SHACKS R10.00

Council workers will give each shack a number. You only need to start paying when you have a permit and when your shack has a number.

Where to pay:

You can pay at the Council offices or at pay centres to be established.

Representatives of the Sandton and Randburg Town Councils will manage



THE ALEXANDRA PEOPLE'S FUND

The JNF has set up a People's Fund which will be used for community projects. The Fund will get some of its money from the special service charges paid by the residents.

THE ELECTRICITY SERVICE:

The JNF has agreed that the Regional Services Council will be responsible for the supply of electricity to Alexandra. The RSC has appointed Eskom as its agent.

In the next few months the RSC will pay Eskom to have the electrical system in Alexandra fixed.

- ◆ The meters in every house will be checked.
- ◆ All broken meters will be repaired or replaced.
- ◆ The meters will be read every month.

Pay centres are being established near to Alexandra. These centres will be open at times suitable to residents.

A book will soon be distributed to residents with more information on the electricity service, office hours and office locations.

Special electricity charges:

- ◆ Electricity will now cost 10 cents per unit.

Broken meters:

- ◆ Residents will pay R50.00 per month until the meter is fixed.
- ◆ Businesses will pay R80.00 per month until the meter is fixed.



LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENTS:

The JNF has set up three Committees to plan ways of making Alexandra a better place to live.

The Housing, Land & Development Committee will:

- ◆ look for more land for the residents of Alexandra.
- ◆ plan the building of low-cost housing on the Far East Bank.
- ◆ improve conditions in the hostels and talk to hostel dwellers about turning some of the hostels into family units.
- ◆ find out how and when the rented houses could be transferred to the people.

The Finance Committee will:

- ◆ find out everything about the condition of services in Alexandra.
- ◆ involve the community in the upgrading plans.
- ◆ decide what the most important needs are.
- ◆ look for money to pay for the upgrading of services.

The Constitutional Committee will:

- ◆ look at the problems in the present local government system.
- ◆ recommend ways of setting up a non-racial local government with one tax base.

PROGRESS REPORT

What has happened since the Alexandra Accord was signed?

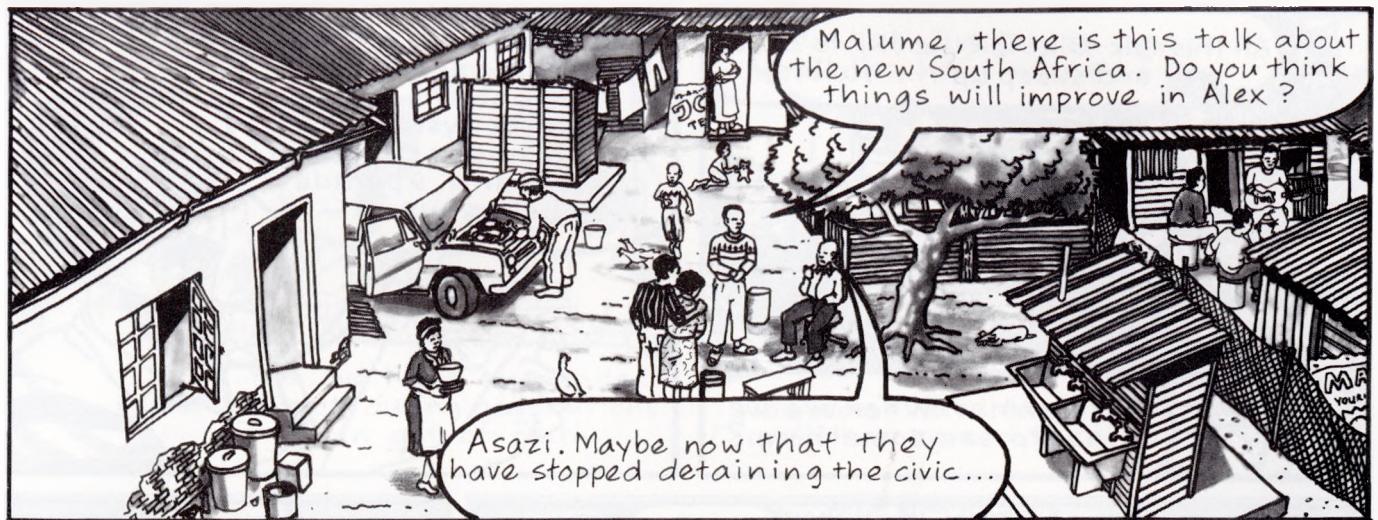
- ◆ Land on the Far East Bank is now available for housing. The JNF will develop this land with the involvement of the people of Alexandra.
- ◆ Water and toilet facilities in the hostels and shack areas will be upgraded soon.
- ◆ The RSC has given money to repair the roads and the electrical system in Alexandra.
- ◆ The Sandton and Randburg Town Councils will help manage Alexandra until there is one local authority for the area.
- ◆ The RSC has appointed Eskom as their agent to manage the electricity supply in Alexandra.
- ◆ The JNF continues to negotiate for more land for the residents of Alexandra.

ALEXANDRA

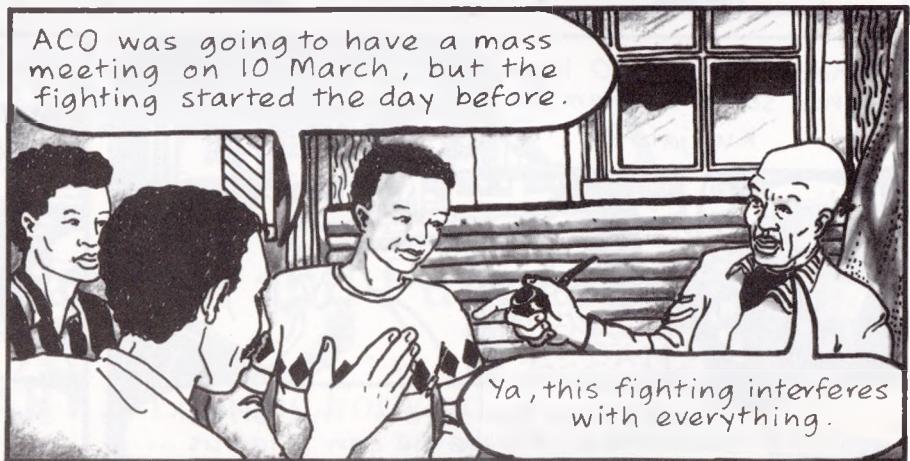
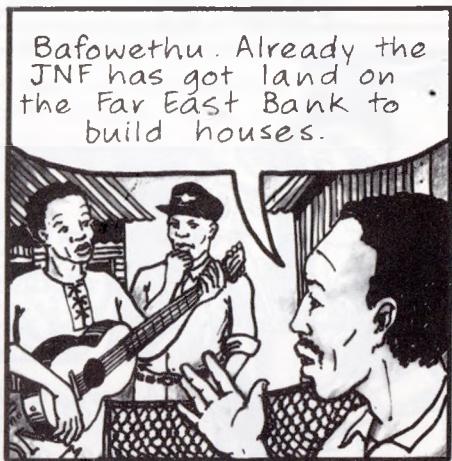
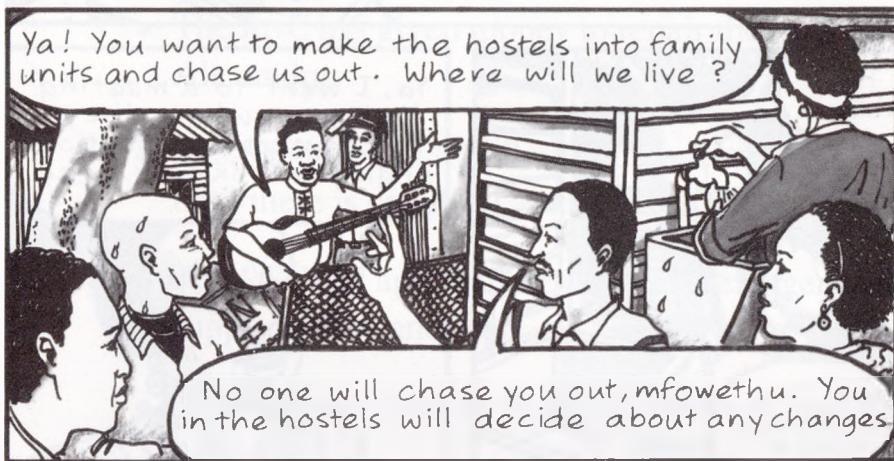
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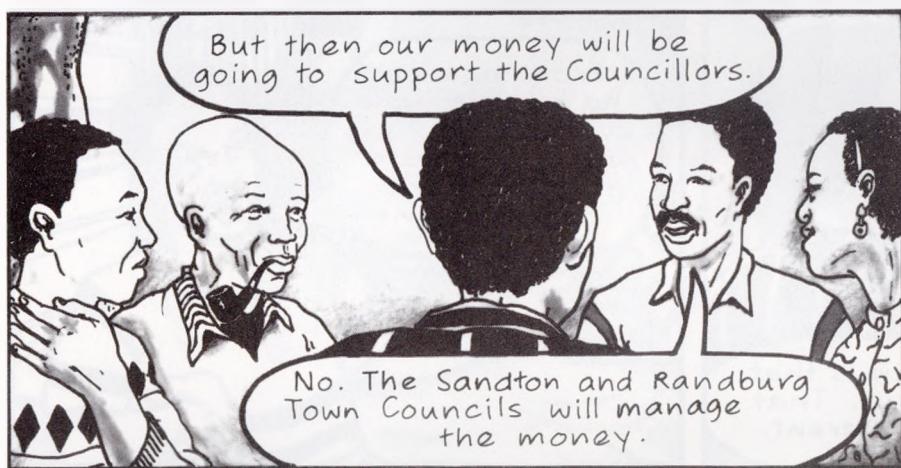
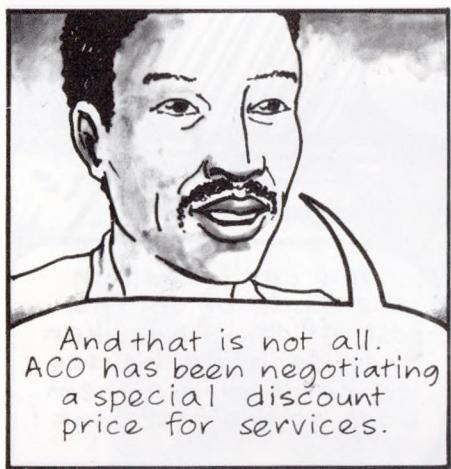
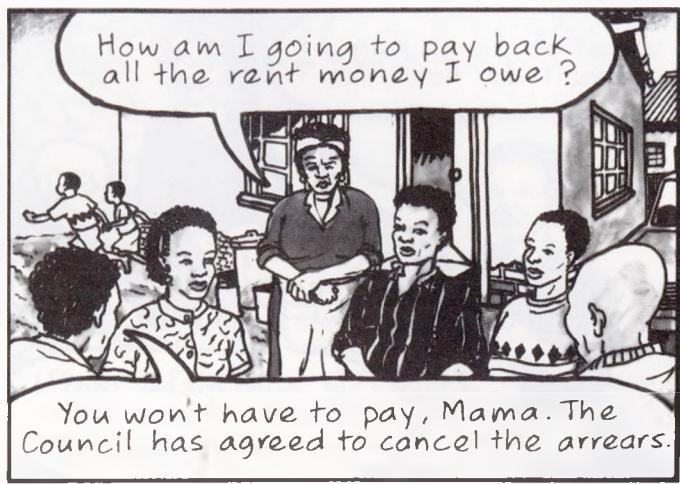
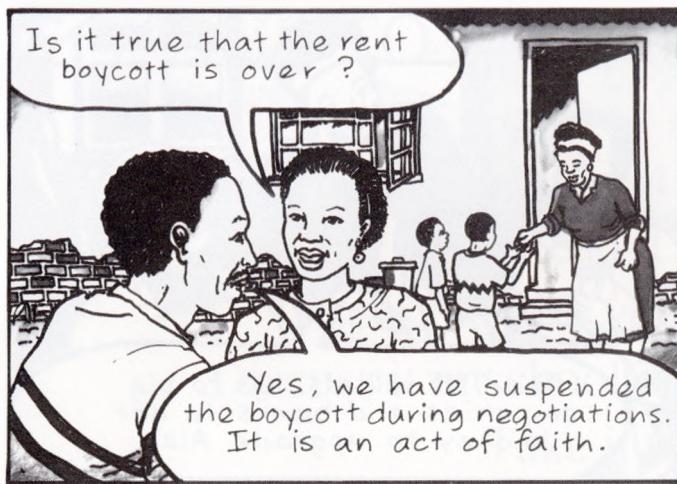
PART 2: Looking Forward

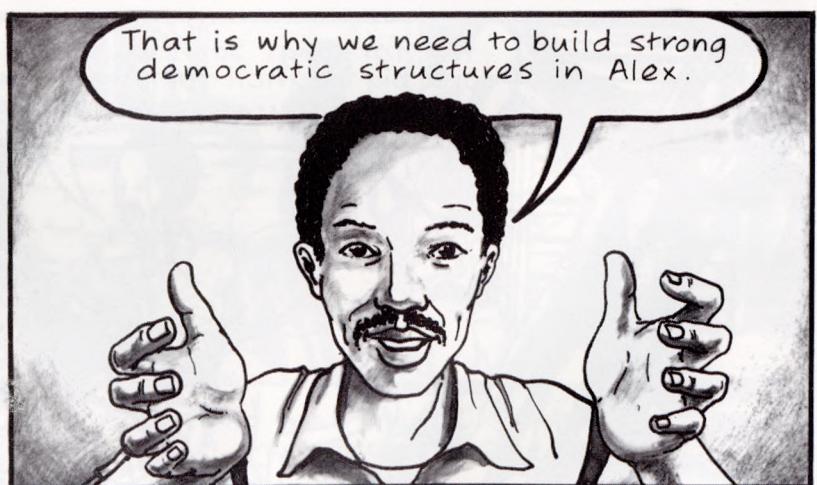
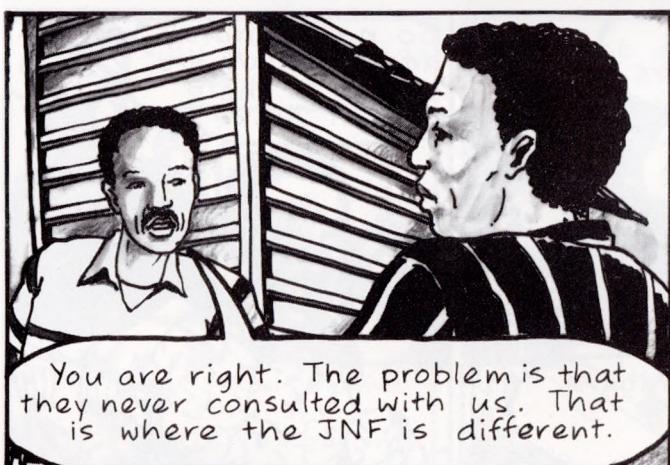
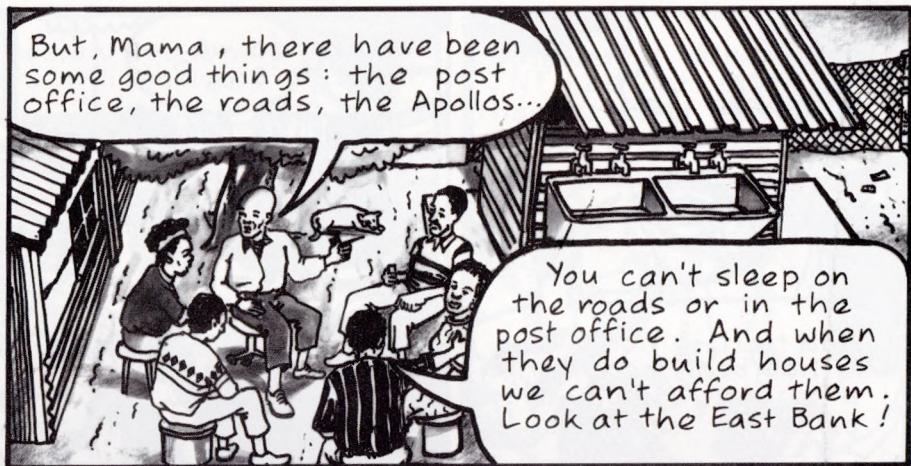




All the groups that have real power to improve Alex are working together in the JNF.







WAYS TO USE THIS PUBLICATION

Read it yourself.

Read it to others.

Discuss it with your family and friends.

Discuss it at school and in your study groups.

Take it to meetings.



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE ALEXANDRA ACCORD?

Send your comments to:

The Secretary,
The Joint Negotiating Forum,
PO Box 78001,
Sandton - 2146.

Everyone in Alex can participate
in its future development.



Cover artwork © Sam Nhlengetwa 1991.

The original of this work is on exhibition at the Johannesburg Art Gallery as part of the AA Vita Awards until 27 July 1991.