A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS NUTRITION PROGRAMME (PSNP) IN THE EASTERN CAPE

By

E.M. HOUSTON

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SUPERVISOR

MS LOUISE VINCENT

Department of Political Studies

Rhodes University

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CONTENTS

Abstract

The thesis focuses on the Primary School Nutrition Programme (PSNP), particularly in the Eastern Cape, as a government nutrition and education project, and its failure to achieve its stated goals. The programme experienced problems almost as soon as it was introduced. The press reported incidents of fraud and maladministration and the programme was halted and restarted numerous times. The thesis seeks to offer some insight as to why the government was unable to reach its stated objectives in the implementation phase of the programme. State theory informs the thesis in an attempt to further explain why governments often seem unable to attain their intended goals.

The thesis provides an alternative to government development programmes, arguing that NGOs are better equipped to deal with the particular problems that people on the ground experience when dealing with issues like nutritional vulnerability. Operation Hunger provides an excellent case study for how development of this nature ought to occur.

The essential argument of the thesis is that there is an inherent tension between what a government's stated intentions is and what it, in reality, intends to gain from such programmes. It is the contention of this thesis that the Government of National Unity embarked on the PSNP, not to ensure nutritional development for its own sake, but rather to curry favour with its constituents. Operation Hunger, and other organisations like it, provide relief to vulnerable communities with no hidden agenda in mind. Their mandate is solely that they provide assistance. The thesis argues, then, that NGOs have a role in domestic and international politics, that they can make up for or do better, or at least well, things that governments struggle to do.

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Introduction

One hundred days after President Mandela took office in South Africa, he launched a number of development programmes, in an attempt to kick-start the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The RDP was a broad policy outline, promising development in the previously disadvantaged sectors of the South African community. For a variety of reasons, almost three months after the ANC began its leadership of the Government of National Unity (GNU), the RDP's delivery was scant and sporadic.

The Primary Schools Nutrition Programme was one of these hundred-day programmes. It was started in the context of an educational and nutritional crisis in South Africa, especially in the rural areas, where there was no culture of learning and low attendance at schools. In terms of nutrition, some estimates held that 33% of children in the former-Transkei were stunted and there were many other problems of malnutrition, including related diseases.

In South Africa during the Apartheid era, NGOs like Operation Hunger and Gadra, were at the forefront of trying to alleviate these problems. Once South Africa's government was legitimised by the general election in 1994, foreign donors began to invest in RDP schemes rather than those run by the NGO sector. The establishment of the PSNP further decreased the role of the NGOs in this particular area of development. The organisations, with their decades of expertise, were informed that their services were no longer required and that they would receive no government funding for primary school feeding.

Soon after the implementation of the programme in the Eastern Cape, it ran into trouble. Accusations of fraud, theft and maladministration were levelled at the regional government and the bureaucrats that ran the programme. At one stage feeding was halted altogether, only to be boosted by further budgetary allocations. The programme then once again ground to a halt in many schools. After a recent review process, it has been decided that the programme should continue, using the expertise of the

NGOs. Organisations were asked to tender if they wanted to participate. Significantly, perhaps the most experienced NGO of all in this field, Operation Hunger, decided not to tender as it is critical of the way in which the government has conceptualised and proceeded with the programme.

The government has at various points alluded to several different aims of the programme. One is educational: the idea that by offering food at school children would be more likely to attend and more able to concentrate one they got there. A second possible aim is nutritional: to attempt to alleviate some of the problems of malnutrition, particularly in the rural areas. A third aim, which was sometimes alluded to, was that of development and community empowerment, for example job creation. By involving the community in the provision of school meals, jobs would be created in the process.

This study, therefore, seeks to argue that one of the difficulties of the PSNP is that there is an inherent tension between what a government's stated intentions are and what it in reality intends to gain. Governments do not embark on development programmes for development's sake, but rather to gain favour with their constituents. The thesis will further argue that NGOs have a role to play in the development of South Africa and they are better equipped to embark on programmes like the PSNP.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter One provides a description of the PSNP, its historical background and the attempts made by the government to address the programme's inadequacies. The chapter attempts to reach some conclusions as to why the programme did not fulfil the aims and objectives that it intended to.

Chapter Two continues in this vein, offering some theoretical

insights into why programmes of this kind fail. The chapter argues that there is an inherent tension between government policy and development programmes. This chapter seeks to arrive at some conclusion as to why states, indeed, embark on these kind of programmes at all, and when they do why they seldom seem to do the best job possible.

Chapter Three provides an alternative to government-managed development programmes. The chapter argues that NGOs are better equipped to provide these kinds of services. The chapter defines what is meant by the term NGO, focuses on the international dimension of NGOs, takes into account NGO strengths and weaknesses and finally reaches the conclusion that NGOs can often perform functions that governments struggle to.

Chapter Four provides a description of Operation Hunger, as an alternative to the PSNP, as an agency that has provided nutritional assistance to primary school children (amongst others), for 20 years. The chapter traces the history of the organisation, arguing that the strategies used by Operation Hunger are far more appropriate for dealing with South Africa's nutritional problems.

CHAPTER ONE

The Primary School Nutrition Programme

1.1. Historical Background

In his State of the Nation address on 24 May 1994 President Mandela pledged to implement a nutritional feeding scheme in every primary school where such a need was established. His aim was to address the imbalances that had been created by Apartheid in terms of children's nutritional development. Thus, the Primary School Nutrition Programme (PSNP) was implemented on the 1 September 1994 following this announcement. The programme was to form part of the 5 100-day projects which the President had prioritised in terms of South Africa's development agenda.

Feeding began in all South African schools soon after the announcement of the programme. At the end of the second school term of 1995 it was discovered that R67 million of the R113 million budget for the Eastern Cape PSNP had already been spent. This was to be the first of many scandalous discoveries which have plagued the programme, especially in the Eastern Cape, since its outset. At the start of the third school term the PSNP collapsed after the "belated discovery of widespread fraud and mismanagement" (Amner,1995:32). The regional government suspended the programme in late August because of this discovery. It was also decided that a regional nutritional surveillance programme be established by nurses in the region (City Press,6.8.95) and that the National Progressive Primary Health Care Network (NPPHCN) investigate the programme (WM&G,15-21.3.96). The programme was to be investigated by a Technical Task Team that made recommendations to the RDP standing committee.

In the same week the Weekly Mail and Guardian reported that the province had spent its' entire budget for the financial year ending April 1996, in just four months. The budget for the year

totalled R114 million (WM&G,4-10.8.95). The director-general of the province, Mr Thomazile Botha, admitted at this stage that the province had been unprepared for the PSNP, but argued that the criticism levelled at Bisho was unfair, because the national government had implemented the programme haphazardly (Saturday Star,12.8.95). Others, especially the press in the region, agreed with Botha that:

> In its enthusiasm for delivering a vote-catching national development project at break-neck speed, the national government introduced a policy today for implementation tomorrow, doing so without adequate provision for an enabling process to facilitate implementation (cited in Amner,1995:36).

The national coordinator of the programme, Ms Diane Kloka, agreed that because the programme was a 100-day project[1], pressure was placed on the PSNP to "deliver in haste without any clear sense of what was required or how to go about it" (WM&G,4-10.8.95). President Mandela called for a full audit of the programme in the province and, in a press release (7.8.95) the regional government condemned fraud and corruption.

The fourth term of the year saw a scaled down version of the PSNP, this time primary school children only received feeding three times a week (Daily Dispatch,15.8.95). By the end of 1995, the entire budget was again spent, leaving no funds for the remaining school term. Officials running the PSNP in Bisho estimated that a further R53 million was needed before the new PSNP budget was granted in April 1996 (Amner,1995:32). This discovery came in the wake of a survey, conducted by the provincial health and welfare department, which indicated that the most needy children in the Eastern Cape are from farming and resettlement communities.

When the new school year began in 1996 no feeding commenced, as there had been no additional budgetary allocations made to the

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[1]After President Mandela had been in office for 100 days, he prioritised a number of projects, and endorsed them as his own. Nutrition, and the subsequent Primary Schools Nutrition Programme, was one of these priorities.

Eastern Cape. In the seventh week of the school term feeding started again, Bisho having been granted R35 million to see them through the financial year. This time, however, only children from Sub A to Standard 2 would receive sandwiches (M&G,15-21.03.96).

Before the budget for the current financial year was allocated an intensive investigation recommended that NGOs that had, in the past, been feeding in the region again be brought on board.[2] Before the start of the PSNP, NGOs were carrying out various nutritional functions in the Eastern Cape. When the PSNP began its work, organisations like The Grahamstown Area Distress Relief Association (GADRA) and Operation Hunger were "thanked for their efforts, but told that their services were no longer needed" (Amner,1995:35). In the Western Cape, the PSNP was almost entirely run by NGOs alone, and in the 921 schools that were involved in feeding, only one case of fraud was reported, amounting to R4000. At the start of the programme, Operation Hunger offered technical assistance to the programme, but the programme administrators continued on their own agenda.

NGOs in the area were asked to tender to the PSNP and by the end of August 1996 the NGOs who would implement the programme had been chosen. They were to begin feeding at the start of the last school term of the year, which began 7 October. Reports confirmed that there had been no feeding in the Eastern Cape for at least 2 months. Five NGOs had been contracted to begin their work at that time, after being approved by the Tender Board at the end of August (EPH,18.09.96). They are, Eastern Cape Relief Action, The Association for Consumer Justice, Daily Bread Charitable Trust, The National Educare Forum and The Provincial Council of

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[2]This, of-course, had been recommended a number of times in the history of the programme. It had, indeed, been stated in the policy framework of the programme that NGOs had invaluable expertise in the field that should be used to the fullest extent. Both the Technical Task Team report and that of the NPPHCN, recommended that the PSNP was ignoring the knowledge that NGOs could impart to it.

Churches[3] The inclusion of NGOs as the agents of delivery in the PSNP has not been without its problems. The programme was again suspended in September 1996, when three of the NGOs failed to submit their documents to the regional government (EPH,10.10.96). The NGOs chosen to implement the programme continued to do so for the rest of the 1996 school year, but most admit that they are not feeding 100 percent of the children mandated to them (DD,15.10.96).

1.2. An Appraisal of the PSNP's intentions

According to the policy framework issued by the national government, the programme lies between two development priorities in South Africa: the need to improve health, through nutrition, and the need to improve education. The government argued that these challenges needed be seen in the context of the broader development task that faces South Africa. The government was aware of the fact that extensive work had to be done in the nutritional sphere to address the problems of short-term hunger, protein deficiency and infection, as well as ensuring that there was education around these issues. Indeed, it was the intention of the policy-makers to:

> effect long term sustainable improvements in diet and nutritional status, nutrition intervention should be linked to nutrition education programmes for children, teachers and parents (National Policy Framework and Operational Guidelines,1995:2-4).

The aim of the programme to provide sustainable development, through nutritional intervention and education is an admirable one, and one of the most important in improving nutritional status, but as yet has been completely ignored in the implementation of the programme. The NGOs who tendered to the PSNP, did not have to incorporate an education component in their tender conditions. The policy framework goes on to comment that there is "sufficient evidence to suggest that malnutrition, parasitic infection and temporary hunger, ... are primary factors

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[3]Please see figure 1 for details of the regions of the Eastern Cape that the NGOs serve.

influencing a child's 'active learning capacity'" (1995,2-4).

The aims of the programme are thus: firstly, to improve the learning capacity of needy and hungry children, to alleviate temporary hunger, to educate children around health issues, to combat poverty, and "to phase out the provision of food when other RDP key activities start showing positive effects" (Policy Framework,1995:3-2). It was also intended that there be micro-nutrient supplementation, parasite eradication, nutrition education as part of the prescribed curriculum, and a linking of this programm to other development initiatives within the RDP.

In terms of targeting, the PSNP intended to target needy schools, rather than needy pupils within schools. Within a targeted school, especially those in the rural areas and those serving informal settlements, every child was to receive food. The factors to be taken into account when targeting schools were to be: unemployment, budgetary constraints, delivery capacity and income levels (Policy Framework,1995:4-1). The programme was also to ensure that there be an ongoing monitoring process.

It is clear that with the exception of sporadic temporary hunger alleviation, the programme failed to meet its own aims. The nutritional status of children, with the programme running for almost 2 years, has never been evaluated. Nutritional education was never embarked upon. Parasitic infection was not dealt with and the programme was not linked to other RDP development initiatives, except where the government was able to create jobs for women living in the targeted communities. This meant that there was little or no empowerment in the community and sustainable development simply did not occur.

Why, then, did the government fail to meet the stated objectives of the PSNP? One suggestion is that there is a tension between the stated objectives of the programme and the

real reason why government embarks on such a programme, namely, to curry favour with its constituency.

1.3. Key difficulties with the PSNP

1.3.1. Theft and Corruption

There were numerous reports of "ghost schools", in that they existed only on paper. When Bisho took over the reigns of the feeding programme, there were no computerised record systems for the former Ciskei or Transkei, and the Health and Education departments had to rely on hand-written documents which can be easily tampered with. The departments could further not rule out the possibility that they had indeed been tampered with. According to Amner, at least R2,8 million of the PSNP's initial budget had been "gobbled up by various scams in the Eastern Cape" (1995,33). Some of these scams had been committed by recycling suppliers' invoices, for example, officials altered invoices and resubmitted them for payment. They would then open an account in the suppliers name and deposit the cheque into their account (Amner,1995:33). Some school principals and contractors inflated pupil estimates so as to receive more funds. These reports prompted an investigation which led to the discovery of more fraud and corruption.

1.3.2. Information Systems

This raises the question of how one can be expected to manage a huge development project if one does not have reliable data. "With inadequate information about its school system and even less information about the nutritional status of pupils, the Eastern Cape scheme was unable to target the neediest schools" (Amner,1995:35). Sheelagh Shelver adds to this by commenting on the status of the programme under the new auspices of the five NGOs. She believes that the NGOs that are now feeding are better equipped to do the job, because they have been feeding in the area and know of the presence of schools that the government perhaps had no knowledge of. However, the organisations now have areas too large to be fully acquainted with, and small schools, particularly in the farm areas, those that have the most need for

programmes like this, will be left out of the process. Feeding every scholar in the pre-primary classes of every Eastern Cape school is a huge task, to say the least, and those that the programme seeks to target most, will be ignored or overlooked (Sheelagh Shelver, Interview 2).

1.3.3. Overstretching the budget

The provincial administration of the programme tried to feed every primary school child in the province, regardless of need. The budget was far too small to be able to feed 1,9 million pupils, by Mr Bata's own admission (Interview 2). Amner points out that this is a case of basic mental arithmetic; 1,9 million pupils multiplied by 180 school days multiplied by 70c per pupil amounts to R239,4 million (1995:8). There simply had to be targeting so as to ensure that the budget stretched to April 1996.

1.3.4. There was no clear aim

The programme held as its aims the eradication of malnutrition, attracting children to school, to get them through the school day once they were there and to empower the community through the use of small business and community groups as suppliers. In so doing the PSNP was unable to target one clear and identifiable aim and to stick to a programme to achieve it (Amner, 1995:9).

1.3.5. The monitoring procedures were inadequate.

In its haste to deliver a programme, the administration of the programme failed to put in place procedures for evaluating the programme and for merely monitoring where the money was spent.

1.3.6. The inherent tension between government and development programmes.

One of the difficulties of the PSNP is that there is an inherent tension between what a government's stated intentions are and what it really intends to gain. The history of the South African governments' involvement in nutritional development, particularly after 1991, when the National Party were involved in a bid to

ensure themselves a place in the new dispensation, suggests that this tension does in fact exist. In August 1991, R220 million was made available by the government for the Nutritional Development Programme to provide feeding until the end of March 1992. No set amount was allocated to the Eastern Cape, the second poorest region in South Africa at the time, and R390 000 was paid out to 6 of 100 applicants (EPH,28.11.91). The Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage and District School Feeding Fund was allocated R300 000, its first allocation from government in its' 30 year existence. The total amount allocated to the Eastern Cape was R400 000 (PE Express,20.11.91). The government called a meeting of all interested parties in December of that year, so as to empower people on the ground to get involved in the process (Weekend Post,23.11.91).

In June 1992, it was reported that there was corruption in the programme in the Eastern Cape (EPH,5.1.92), at which point Dr Rina Venter, then Minister of Health and Population Development, called for all nutritional aid to be streamlined into one programme under the auspices of the National Nutrition and Social Development Programme (NNSDP). All of this aid was to be received through the clinics (BD,23.9.92), at "one stop services at grass roots level" (Citizen,23.9.92), in a bid to create self-reliance. The R660 million budget used big business to provide the food relief, which at the time charged three times as much as NGOs providing the same service.

One of the organisations granted a tender to provide feeding was co-ordinated by Dr Louis Pasques, who had military intelligence links and had never been involved in feeding (WM&G,5.6.92). Operation Hunger at the time made accusations that the programme would never combat starvation in South Africa. It claimed that the programme was allocating funds to new organisations that had no knowledge of South Africa's particular nutritional context, and that months after the tenders had been allocated feeding had not occurred. Operation Hunger had to close some of its feeding schemes because these new organisations had been granted funds

they had hoped to gain (Star,25.9.92). This experience suggests that the former government embarked on these programmes not so much out of a genuine desire to find solutions to the problem of nutrition but rather, in a last- minute bid to ensure for itself a section of the vote that would gain it a place in the Government of National Unity. Ironically, the new government's PSNP appears to have been characterised by the same malaise, suggesting that there is an in-built tension in attempts by governments to embark on programmes of this nature.

1.3.7. The government's examination of the PSNP

Because of the criticism levelled at the government in terms of the PSNP, it established a number of audits and task teams. In August 1995 the Technical Task Team that had been investigating the PSNP, released their report to the RDP standing committee. The standing committee would evaluate the recommendations of the report and on this basis decide how the programme should be further implemented.

1.3.7.1. Technical Task Team Report

By way of introduction to the reasons for the PSNP being investigated, the task team lists:

a) the lack of input from the provincial administration as to budgetary allocations,

b) the lack of reliable data available to the administrators of the programme,

c) the lack of commensurate reduction in the price of the menu supplied with the reduction in the second budget,

d) the ineffective tendering system and,

e) the lack of effective planning and monitoring procedures,

as the reasons for the failure of the project (Annexure to the RDP Standing Committee report, September 1995).

The task team's first mandate was an investigation into the wastage of food in relatively affluent schools. The Task Team conceded that there may have been areas in the region where feeding was not necessary because there was no presence of

malnutrition and because some families could indeed afford to feed their children themselves. The report concludes, on this count, that there is a need for strict targeting to be embarked upon. To this end, initial steps to ensure this were initiated, in the form of a weighing programme to establish areas where nutritional problems were at their worse. "A specific targeting phase should take place from January to March 1996 whereby identified needy schools would have formalised nutrition and socio-economic surveys" (Annexure to the Standing Committee Report, September 1995).

Although this was done to a certain extent, these surveys have by no means been carried out in every school deemed needy. The programme's targeting procedure means that needy schools include state schools and rural schools, and exclude Model C, private and church schools. Now that the programme is administered by NGOs there is perhaps a clearer idea of which schools are included in the definition of needy, because the NGOs have contact with the communities on the ground.

It is clear that Mr Bata, himself, has a rather crude understanding of how to tell who is most needy and a completely inadequate understanding of the complexity at hand. This is evidenced by his reply to the question of whom the government sees as needy; "it is 'quite clear' to the government and the NGOs who needs feeding", was his reply. "It is obvious to us who the recipients of this programme should be - those who were discriminated against under Apartheid" (Bata, Interview 1). Exactly who those children are and how the administrators of the programme are supposed to find out where they live is still unclear at this stage.

The report further states that the following were problems encountered by the PSNP:

1. The lack of an effective monitoring procedure meant that problems were suspected but could not be proven.
2. Communities were "manipulated" by those wishing to tender,

to ensure that prospective tenderers won their contracts.

3. Confusion over who had in fact won the tenders resulted in duplicity of feeding.

4. A culture of going against the authority of the regional government arose, due to an apparent reluctance on the part of administrators to repeatedly refer to Bisho.

5. There was no real empowerment in the communities, because;
   a. Tenders were won by affluent sectors of the community
   b. Women's groups fronted for big business
   c. Some groups sold their contracts to big business
   d. NGOs were omitted from the process (Annexure to the RDP Standing Committee Report, September 1995:35).

The solutions recommended by the Task Team were as follows:

1. A competent management staff was to be hired immediately,
2. Feeding was to resume immediately, within the constraints of the budget,
3. Donated staff should be formalised,
4. Governing bodies, which are adequately trained, were to be established in all schools,
5. Underskilled suppliers were to be given aid in terms of technical skills,
6. The Rapid Audit results were to be formalised,
7. The procuring system was to be changed from tender to quotation,
8. Computers were to be used and personnel trained in their functioning,
9. Communities were to consulted on their ideas for the PSNP,
10. Appropriate accounting procedures were to be set in place (Annexure to the RDP Standing Committee Report, September 1995:36).

The RDP Standing Committee made the recommendation that the delivery of the PSNP be divided into short- and long-term strategies.

<u>The short-term</u>: The committee found that the Task Team's report

did not provide a "feasible" short-term solution. The administrators of the PSNP, in the short-term, was to be handed over to the provincial government. The province was divided into 6 regions and a director from the regional government was seconded to each region. The schools in need of feeding were to be immediately identified and the number of children in each school registered. The principal of every school was to head the process and the Parents Association of each school was to provide voluntary staff to prepare the food.

The long-term: The PSNP should continue on its path of providing sustainable development in the region. A more integrated planning approach had to be embarked upon. Monthly reports were to be delivered to the RDP Standing Committee (RDP Standing Committee Report, September 1995:23-27).

In the opinion of Amner, the recommendations of the RDP Standing Committee, calling for widespread changes, "appear(ed) to have been largely ignored in favour of a morale-boosting restart to the programme" (1995:9).

1.4. Quo Vadis? PSNP

Eastern Cape Relief Action (ECRA) is an organisation operating out of Port Elizabeth and is made up of school teachers. The organisation used to manage a similar programme under the former NNSDP and at that time targeted the neediest children in any given school. At present the organisation is going ahead with feeding in their sub-region (A) and is feeding all primary school children in Sub A to Standard 2 in the schools allocated by the PSNP as the neediest schools. Mr Terreblanche, the co-ordinator of the programme for his region, admits that the organisation has encountered a number of problems, but these are dealt with immediately.

The organisation has encountered a number of schools that are in need of feeding but are not PSNP-targeted schools. This problem is dealt with swiftly. The principal of the school is asked to apply, in writing, to the PSNP head office in Bisho. The head office replies promptly, by adding these schools to their feeding lists and the organisation is given permission to feed these schools.

Mr Terreblanche has a fundamental problem with the manner in which the PSNP is targeting. He claims that some schools under his supervision do not need nutritional assistance, and others need help for only some students. Previously, ECRA targeted needy children within schools, but now the government programme is feeding all primary school children within a certain school, regardless of need. in the opinion of Mr Terreblanche this kind of targeting is unrealistic. "When a child graduates from Standard 2 to Standard 3, he or she does not leave their nutritional problem behind. They still need help" (Terreblanche, Interview 1).

The National Educare Forum, co-ordinated by Mr Vernon Weitz in the Eastern Cape, is the NGO contracted by the government to ensure that the PSNP is delivered in region D. In a report dated 2-27 September 1996, the organisation outlines the process it undertook in providing food to various schools. Before feeding began the organisation ensured that members of the community were sub-contracted to prepare the food. Mr Weitz (Interview 1) explained that this was not an easy task, because the organisation needs, on average, 30 000 loaves of bread a day. However, the organisation has undertaken to continue in their endeavour to empower the community and to make them part of the process. Mr Weitz says that the fundamental question to be asked is whether this programme is "development in general, if it is developing an infrastructure for the use of people on the ground, and whether it is good for the development of children through education and nutrition" (Interview 1). They are also aware of ensuring that women, particularly, are brought into the process.

Mr Weitz has major policy problems with the PSNP, but points out that this is because of the history of the programme. One of the biggest problems he has encountered is the programme's shift from big business to the NGO sector. "Because there is big money involved, big business obviously will want a part in the process. Previously they did have a part to play, now there has to be a move away from this towards the NGO sector's way of doing things", says Mr Weitz (Interview 1). The NEF also attempts to ensure a level of discourse around these issues, especially in between NGOs involved in this sector. For this reason the organisation is spending the 2c profit they make on each sandwich, on the evaluation and reflection of the work they are doing.

Mr Weitz believes that the government has to address the fact that it excludes the pre-primary sector of the education system from the programme. He believes that in doing so, the programme is running contrary to the government's education policy. Pre-primaries are conceptualised as part of what is called the foundation phase, which ends in standard 2. The PSNP feeds children that are almost in the middle of that phase. The NEF intends to publish a newsletter every three months in which it means to meet these challenges in a discursive manner (Weitz, Interview 1). The newsletter will serve as a point of discourse for schools, sub-contractors, NGOs, government and co-ordinators of the programme (NEF report, 2 -27 September 1996:9).

Mr Weitz and his organisation are at the forefront of using their expertise as a NGO and as a development agency to ensure that there is empowerment in the communities they are serving and that there is a real confrontation of challenges on their part. This is perhaps what the government intended when it brought NGOs on board the process.

Daily Bread Charitable Trust, based in East London, is accustomed to serving destitute communities. They have been involved with

pre-primary feeding in the past and thought it important that feeding continue in the primary school-going years. According to Ms Christine Gush, a fieldworker for the organisation, DBCT has had its share of problems since it was commissioned to the PSNP. Ms Gush believes that although problems must be attended to, the delivery of food cannot be hampered and the children of the region cannot become victims of political squabblings or administrative problems. Daily Bread hopes that there are other NGOs in their region who would be willing to work with them, because an "intersectoral programme is most productive" (Gush, Interview 1).

Irwin Friedman, of the NPPHCN, believes that the PSNP cannot be expected to do what it was never intended to do. It intended to provide 30% RDA of energy levels and to get children to school. While the children were there they had something to eat so as to increase their concentration levels. Dr Friedman says that in these terms the programme is fulfilling its role (Friedman, Interview 1).

Shelver believes that this difference is only subtle, because in the perception of those receiving the sandwich and their families, it is not the 30% RDA of energy that brings them to school, it is that there is no food at home. The nutritional value of the food is of little consequence to hungry people. This also releases some of the burden on the household, because it frees up food (Shelver, Interview 1).

The PSNP took over many of Operation Hunger's feeding schemes, allowing the government to relinquish a number of unsustainable programmes that they had been involved in. Shelver believes that this suited the government policy at the time as they did not want other stake holders involved. However, many stake holders can often result in duplication and a lack of standardisation (Shelver, Interview 1).

According to Operation Hunger, there are children in the urban areas of Port Elizabeth that do not have enough nutrients in their bodies, as far as scientific measures of malnutrition are concerned. Whilst collecting nutritional status data in a Port Elizabeth scheme that Operation Hunger is involved in, Shelver found that the PSNP's delivery was sporadic even towards the end of last year (Shelver, Interview 1). The feeding schemes that are being run by Operation Hunger in Port Elizabeth are intended for children that are pre-school going. Operation Hunger supplies a peanut butter sandwich and a cup of soup. This meal is considerably above 30% RDA.

According to Mr Kulekile Bata, Public Relations Officer for the Eastern Cape government, the PSNP is now being run by NGOs because "they are used to these communities, and they are known and are accepted, and they are experienced in these communities. They have a track record of delivery" (Bata, Interview 2). NGOs that won tenders for their particular regions had to adhere to a number of conditions. They have to be a non-profit organisations. They have to carry out the vision of the Health Ministry and that of the President. They have to have a proven track record in feeding and in capacity-building. They have to be prepared to interact with the communities in the sub-region in which they work. Mr Bata believes that the NGOs who have gained the contracts to feed in these sub regions can cover their entire areas because they had signed legally binding documents that hold them precisely to this fact. He further states that the government chose these particular NGOs because it believes in them (Bata, Interview 2).

The PSNP, as defined by Mr Bata, is not meant to continue indefinitely. As conditions in South Africa improve, due to RDP programmes, the PSNP will outlive its usefulness. The PSNP will give people the capacity to enure sustainability by teaching them skills to plan their own projects and give them more control over their lives. The PSNP is due to stop in 1999 (Bata, Interview 2). One of the concerns of the NGO sector is that when this occurs

the funding and infrastructure for organisations involved in feeding will cease to exist.

Mr Bata believes that the PSNP is, in fact, a success story. "In the last two years we have managed to feed school children. We have had problems, we admit, but this programme has touched and had a significant impact on the lives of the communities, on the lives of the children" (Bata, Interview 2).

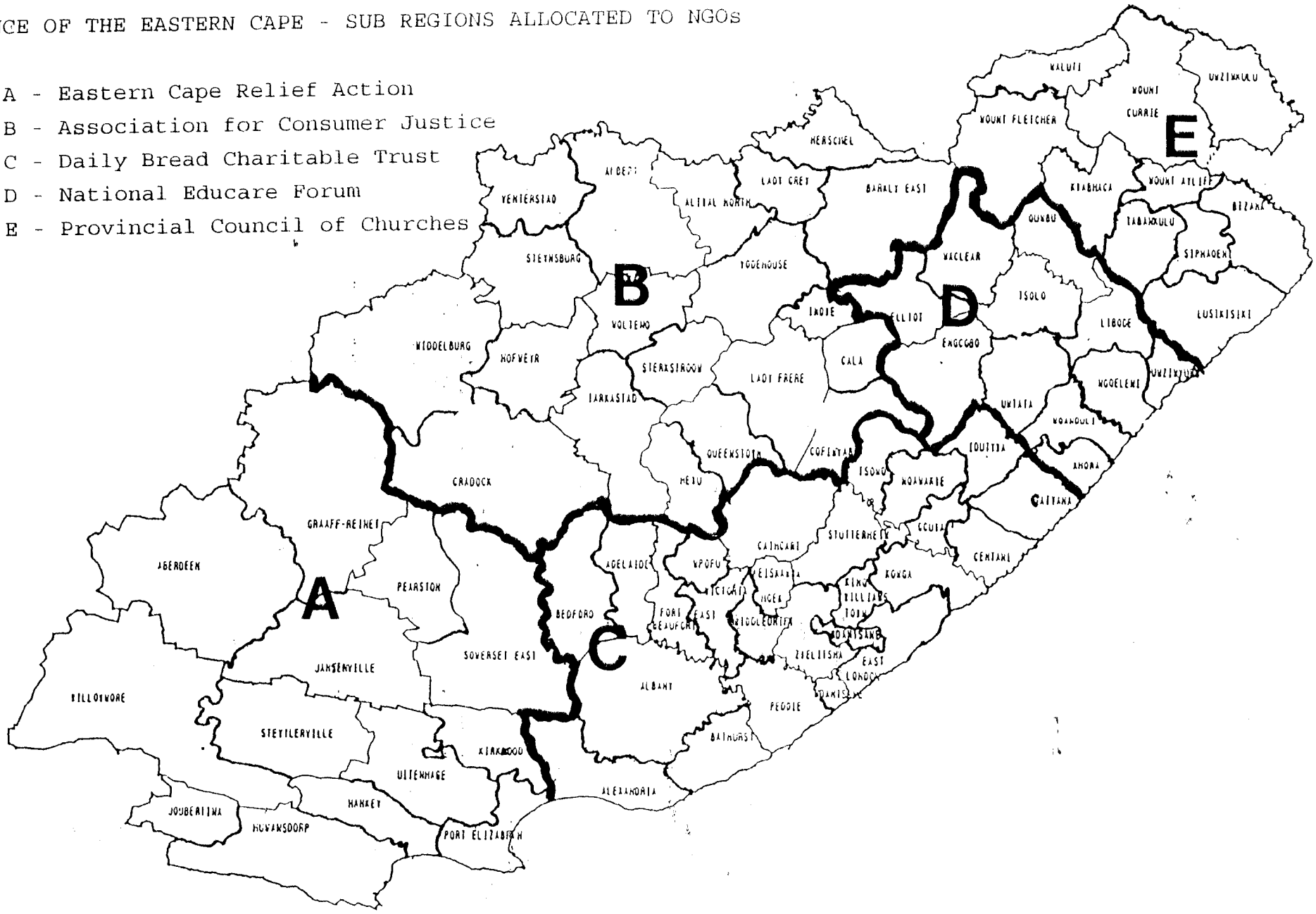
1.5. Conclusion

The fact that children have received food in the Eastern Cape, that there has been some level of job creation and that there has been some economic growth in terms of those who tendered to the PSNP, is a good thing. One has to be heartless to not be moved by the scene of children happily eating their peanut-butter sandwiches. However there are still a number of fundamental questions which remain unanswered. It is the contention of this thesis that the dual problems of nutrition and education can better be addressed by NGOs active at the very local level. This contention is held because of the more general belief that NGOs develop for development's sake and governments develop so that they remain in power.

FIGURE 1

PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE - SUB REGIONS ALLOCATED TO NGOs

KEY: A - Eastern Cape Relief Action
B - Association for Consumer Justice
C - Daily Bread Charitable Trust
D - National Educare Forum
E - Provincial Council of Churches



CHAPTER TWO

Theory of the State

2.1. Overview

Governments often appear to behave in ways that are difficult to understand. They give varying and sometimes contradictory explanations for their own behaviour. They embark on courses of action which appear at the outset doomed to fail. Some have concluded as a result that governments are ill-equipped to engage in many of the activities they may wish to become involved in.

State theory is a well established theoretical field in political studies. The literature attempts to explain the constraints under which the various components of states operate. The present thesis will seek to apply some of the insights of recent contributions to this literature in the attempt to understand why the government embarked on and persisted with, the PSNP despite its obvious shortcomings. The thesis will therefore be guided by theories of the state that ask important questions regarding the appropriateness of the state system in delivering social services in an attempt to explain why states behave as they do. The main question under review is why the PSNP in the Eastern Cape has failed and whether the state, indeed, is equipped to deal with this kind of programme. For most theorists the answer lies in how they conceptualise the nature of the state. It is, further, the intention of the thesis to come to a conclusion as to which actors, in governance, are best-equipped to deal with particular activities. What follows is a brief summary of the schools of thought that will be explored in this thesis.

The functionalists, for example Durkheim, believe that as society progresses, so the size and functions of the state will increase. The state becomes involved in all functions of society and becomes an object to be seized by every interest group in society.

Pluralism contends that the state is an arena for interest group competition. Capitalists are at the forefront of the competition for the government's attention, because they own the resources and because their preservation is necessary for the duplication of capitalism itself.

The exponents of the Public Choice school, such as Le Grand, believe that governments behave according to the assumption that agents acts in their own interests. He argues that governments fail in a similar fashion to markets. If all relevant agents in a market are pursuing their own interests, the result will be the allocation of a commodity that is socially inefficient. Lipton and Simkins, also belonging to the Public Choice school, use the South African Apartheid regime as a case study to show how a state functions in order to maintain power.

In the Marxist school there are a number of views as to how the capitalist class dominates the state. The first is that the capitalist class: actually hold office, secondly that they influence those that hold office, thirdly that the state always acts in the interest of the ruling class, and fourthly that sometimes the state acts contrary to the capitalist class, but in the interests of capitalism in general. This explains why states behave like they do.

Weberians believe that how autonomous a state is depends on how well it can negate societal demands. The greater the resources behind those making the demands and the greater the state's resistance to them, the more autonomous the state is. The main thrust of their argument is that states can and often do act in their own interests.

The following section will review a number of schools of thought concerning the state in terms of these three categories. The first four conceptions of state attempt to define what is meant by the term state.

2.2. The normative state

Those that subscribe to this form of state posit that the state is a symbol of a particular society that is bound together by a common culture, legal system and norms, and are thereby set apart from other groups of people in the world. Therefore, this conception focuses on the state's relationship with its society. This conception underscores that the state is sovereign. This view of the state neglects the fact that many nations are deeply divided along racial, ethnic, religious or normative lines (Ferguson and Mansbach,1989:42)

2.3. The state as ethno-cultural unit

Theorists have, in general terms, distinguished between the terms state and nation, but over the past century there has been an increased identification with the two terms at the grass roots level. Ferguson and Mansbach therefore categorise this kind of theory of state in terms of its relationship with the society that it serves (Ibid:47).

2.4. The functionalist state

The leading proponent of the state as a functional unit, Durkheim, posits that the greater the society's development, the greater the development of that state. The state becomes increasingly involved in all functions in society, thereby centralising these functions. The development of the state also includes the increased division of labour and specialisation in society (Ibid:46).

The neo-functionalists, Badie and Birnbaum argue that

> ... once the state becomes an autonomous power centre, with access to previously unavailable sources of power, it becomes a target of political action, an objective to besieged by every organised group that wishes to impose its own ends on society as a whole (Ibid:47).

2.5. The pluralist state

At the opposite end of the spectrum from the Marxists, is the pluralist school. This position holds that the state is an arena for interest group competition. The state is merely a reflection of the interest group that at any given time is able to muster enough power to influence state policy. The state is viewed as a "passive recipient of societal pressure" (Ferguson and Mansbach,1989:51), and in this sense, is not entirely different from the Marxist conception.

The following understandings of the term state will form the bulk of this chapter and will attempt to understand how the state functions vis a vis its society.

2.6. The Public Choice School

The public choice school subscribes to the belief that governments behave in the interests of those that make up the state. Julian Le Grand posits that governments behave according to the assumption that "all relevant agents pursue their self interest" (Le Grand, 1991: 423). Le Grand examines three kinds of government activity, namely: provision, subsidy and regulation. He argues that governments fail in a similar way to markets. Under certain conditions:

> the production and distribution of a commodity through a competitive market in which all the relevant agents are pursuing their own self-interest will result in an allocation of that commodity that is socially inefficient (Le Grand,1991:423).

This means that competitive markets with agents that pursue their own interests can fail in terms of their ability to provide their commodities efficiently. They will also fail because they are inequitable.

The Public Choice school investigates the implications should government pursue its own interests. This investigation is based on the theory of market failure and is used to establish the

reasons why market allocations will be inefficient. The theory is often accompanied by a move in the direction of a welfare state and a more equitable system, given that market allocations are inequitable. The principal emphasis of the theory is on efficiency (Le Grand,1991:424).

Efficiency is defined in a number of ways. In lay-person's terms efficiency is defined as the production of a commodity at minimum cost in terms of resources used. This is known as X-efficiency. If a commodity is X-inefficient then it will also be allocatively inefficient. This definition also takes account of whether the commodity meets the wants of the consumer as effectively as possible. More formally the term means that "it is impossible to re-allocate resources in such a way as to make one or more persons better off without making someone else worse off" (Le Grand,1991:425). At the level of the firm, dynamic efficiency, is the capacity of the firm to innovate and thereby lower their costs of production or better meet the wants of the consumer. At the level of the nation state, dynamic efficiency is identified with the rate of economic growth, the higher the growth rate, the more dynamically efficient the country (Le Grand,1991:425).

The theory of market failure refers to the market's inability to achieve allocative efficiency. This means that it does not meet the needs or wants of the consumer. The allocation of a commodity through a competitive market will be allocatively inefficient if the market for that commodity possesses a number or all of certain characteristics. These are;

2.6.1. Externalities and public goods

These arise when a third party, who is no other way involved, is affected either by the production or consumption of a commodity. If the party is affected positively, this is called an external benefit, is affected negatively, this is known as an external cost. An example of a commodity with external benefits would be housing improvements and an example of an external cost would be pollution (Le Grand,1991:426). The extreme case of external

benefits is public goods. This is when it is impossible for one person to consume the commodity without the entire community benefiting from it, for example, street lighting or a national defence force. Markets with self-interested agents will under-provide external benefits because the agents cannot capture those benefits. They will not take these benefits into account when making decisions about the appropriate level of activity, they will only consider their own benefits. Markets further tend to over-provide external costs. This is because these costs do not impinge on the agents undertaking the activity, so it is not in their interest to consider them. There will be a greater level of activity than allocative efficiency requires (Le Grand,1991:426).

2.6.2. Increasing returns to scale

The average cost of production decreases as the scale of production increases. Increasing returns to scale gives a competitive advantage to large firms which will tend to monopolise the market. This will be X-efficient, because the commodity is produced at minimum cost, but it would not be allocatively efficient, because too little would be produced at too high a price (Le Grand,1991:427).

2.6.3. Imperfect information

This is the imbalance of information between the consumer and producer. For example, in the field of medical care, doctors know more about health than the patient, so the doctor can exploit the patient telling her that she needs more health care than she really does. Medical care will be oversupplied relative to the efficient level (Le Grand,1991:427).

The second part of Le Grand's argument concerns equity.
Equity has two dimensions; it concerns the distribution of the commodity concerned, which means that it is distributed equally or at least everyone has the ability to obtain a minimum standard of consumption. Secondly, it concerns the overall ability by

consumers to buy the commodities they need and want, it is about "command over economic resources" (Le Grand,1991:428).

Le Grand cites Wolf's theory of government failure. Wolf proposes that government's might not fail in terms of their efficiency were they to behave more like markets. Wolf concentrates on three reasons why self interested governments fail. The first reason is most relevant for our purposes and is; in the market the cost of production is linked to the income that sustains it. However, in non-market enterprise the misallocation of resources is more prevalent, because it is linked to non-price sources such as taxes. When revenues that sustain an activity are unrelated to the cost of that activity, more resources than necessary may be used to produce a certain output. It is important to note at this stage that if possibilities exist for lowering the cost of production, or raising productivity, they are more likely to be ignored by non-market activities than by market activities. Le Grand does point out, though, that not all forms of government intervention involve a disjunction between revenues and costs, some government institutions market their products in a similar fashion to that of the market. Even if there is a disjunction between revenues and costs, this does not mean that there will necessarily be inefficiency (Le Grand, 1991:428). Governments do not have the indicators of efficiency that economies have. They act in a self-interested manner, ignoring the fact that they may not be providing an efficient service to their constituents. The PSNP administration, motivated by the attempt of ensuring re-election, did not take into account that the service they were providing was inefficient because they had no cost indicators to show them that it was, in fact, inefficient and because they merely continued on their own agenda.

The alternative, according to Le Grand, is for the government only to involve itself in three social and economic activities, it can provide commodities because it has access to certain resources, it can tax or subsidise a commodity or it can regulate

the price, quantity or quality of a commodity. Sometimes all three methods of intervention are used by the government. For example, the British public health care service provides free hospitalisation, subsidises health care and regulates it, ensuring certain standards for medical personnel (Le Grand,1991:430).

In terms of efficiency, Le Grand asks the question of why the government will be inadequate in the provision of an efficient service. One of the reasons he cites is that government providers are usually monopolies, sometimes provided for in the government's laws. They seldom have competition and are sometimes even protected from competition. There is no threat of bankruptcy, there are no shareholders to answer to and the market will not be taken over if they are inefficient. This reduces the incentive to keep costs to a minimum. This further means that the cost of government provision will generally be higher than the minimum cost that is feasible. Inefficiency may sometimes mean that the post will be taken over by another office-bearer or may mean a loss in votes, but this is not as effective a constraint as market contestability. For Le Grand there are two sets of circumstances where government provision on its own would be inefficient: firstly, where the government provider is a monopoly and where there is competition from non-profit organisations. Secondly, if the commodity is being sold to consumers at a price related to costs, then the consequence of the cost of government provision being above the minimum cost of provision would result in less being provided and consumed than would be allocatively efficient (Le Grand,1991:433).

In terms of government subsidy, if a commodity is provided free, produced with the aid of government revenue, the only cost carried by the consumer is a perceived one that she has contributed by paying tax. If the commodity is provided at any price below cost, there will be excess demand for that commodity, demand will be in excess of the socially efficient supply. Forced with excess demand, there are two choices, firstly, to

meet all the demand, making the situation socially inefficient. Secondly if the government knows the amount that is socially inefficient, it can simply provide this amount, and decide who gets what (Le Grand,1991:434).

Thus, for those that subscribe to this school of thought, governments behave according tot he principle that all involved agents act in their own interests. If all the agents are pursuing their own interests then the commodity that they produce will be socially inefficient. If a government pursues a policy for to secure their own interest, then that policy will be flawed on implementation.

Merle Lipton and Charles Simkins also subscribe to the public choice school, and agree with Le Grand that governments act in their own interests as economic agents do. They use the South African Apartheid regime as a case study of how a state functions so as to maintain its power. They begin their argument by mentioning that, historically, the South African state was involved in a number of measures to intervene in the country's economic development. This intervention spanned across the international flow of goods, capital, technology, and the mobility of labour (Lipton and Simkins,1993:1).

They follow the history of the South African state from union to the formation of the Government of National Unity, focusing at one point on the National Party's (NP) attempt at liberalisation in order to assure it a place in the new dispensation. They note further that this process began in the early 80s, when the NP began

> ambitious and expensive programmes of socioeconomic reform, some of which, notably black education, were ill-designed, lacking in political legitimacy and tragically wasteful (Lipton and Simkins,1993:11).

The demands on state resources, coupled with the state's inability to stop the wave of protest (on the part of those oppressed and business alike), began the Apartheid state's

unbundling of the bureaucracy. These periods of "winning hearts and minds" were frequently interrupted by periods of brutal militarism, such as the State of Emergency experienced in 1986 (Lipton and Simkins,1993:12).

The scholarly analysis of the role of the state also began to change. The Public Choice school (discussed more fully above) "proposes an economic theory of the state" (Lipton and Simkins,1993:18). It argues that just as economic agents behave in their own interests, so do governments and their bureaucrats. Political actors gain support from their electorates so as to create "a winning coalition of interests" (Lipton and Simkins,1993:18). Civil servants, too, have interests of their own, they are not merely the instruments of the legislature and executive.

Earlier theories had justified the need for state intervention in the economy on the grounds of market failure. This means a number of things, the market is unlikely to provide public goods, such as roads, sanitation or defence, and it is unlikely to do so because it cannot charge the beneficiaries for the supply of these goods. The market, further, does not scope adequately with negative externalities such as pollution (Lipton and Simkins, 1993:18). The reason for both of these inadequacies is simple; it is not in the interests of these actors to do so.

Public choice theory drew attention to state failure. The state's capacity was handicapped by the fact that it had limited capabilities and by the fact that politicians and bureaucrats would inevitably use it power to serve their own interests or those of their supporters (Lipton and Simkins,1993:19).

For Lipton and Simkins, although the state, especially at the early stages of development, should to some degree be involved in the economy, it should not allow for the "untargeted growth" (Lipton and Simkins,1993:23) of social services provided by the government. It is the contention of the authors that this leads

to a system that is wasteful, produces a large bureaucracy and can lead to "soaring taxes and/or fiscal deficits" (Lipton and Simkins,1993:23), while not necessarily addressing poverty.

In summary, the Public Choice School posits that governments will fail in the same way as markets do. If the agents that are providing the commodity act in their own interests, the commodity that they are producing will be inefficient.

2.7. The Marxist state - a society-centred view

In the classical Marxist perspective, when the proletarian class takes over, the state will eventually "wither away", so that those who are in power have no real interest in ruling. Modern Marxists differ on their standpoint of the relationship between the ruling class and the state. One position holds that the dominant capitalist class actually holds office, while another position posits that this ruling class merely influences those in office. A third position is that the state always acts in the interest of the ruling class, and another, still, believes that the state sometimes acts contrary to the ruling class but in the interests of capitalism as a whole (Ferguson and Mansbach, 1989:50). This point of view follows on from the Public Choice school in that the economy, and therefore the state, will always act in the interests of a particular sector of the society. If it is acting in its own interests or that of a particular sector of the society, it will produce an inefficient commodity.

Przeworski and Wallerstein believe that the state is structurally dependent on capital. They define capitalism as the private ownership of scarce resources. Allocating these resources is the prerogative of the capitalist class. In a democracy citizens may express preference about how the resources they do not own are allocated. Marxist political theory claims that under capitalism, the social system must protect those who are the producers of wealth in any society. Capitalists have "public power which no formal institutions can overcome" (Przeworski and

Wallerstein,1988:11). People living in a capitalist society may have voting power and other political rights, but the ability of a government to attain its goals is dictated to by the power of capital. The different political forces that take office cannot alter this, these office-bearers are merely structural. All governments in a capitalist system will act in the interests of the capitalists (Przeworski and Wallerstein,1988:11).

Society is dependent on the capitalists willingness to invest, and this, in turn, depends on the profitability of the investment. Because everyone in society is dependent on the owners of production the state has to be too. Whether governments have goals of their own or whether they want to act in the interests of one particular group, the pursuit of any aim that requires material resources, places them in the situation of structural dependence on those that own capital (Przeworski and Wallerstein,1988:12). Politicians seeking re-election depend on the impact of their policies on firms because these decisions affect employment, investment, and the like. Governments are dependent on owners of capital because the voters are.

One of the questions most important to the Marxist school of thought, when addressing the state's role, is why the state should be thought of as an instrument of the ruling class. According to Ralph Miliband Marxists have given three answers to the above question.

Firstly, the personnel that have dominated government, in terms of the legislature, executive and bureaucracy, have tended to come from the same social strata that have dominated other sectors of society, namely the economic and cultural sectors. The argument follows that in modern capitalist states, the bourgeoisie dominate the three main quarters of social life - the economic, the political and the cultural (Miliband,1977:69). This means that those "who run the state apparatus should,..., be favourably disposed towards those who own and control the larger part of the means of economic activity" (Miliband,

1993:69). The government will be much better disposed towards this sector of the society than any other sector or interest group, and will be convinced of the fact that to serve this group's interest is to serve the entire society.

The second answer that Marxists give to the question of why the state should be thought of as an instrument of the ruling class, has to do with the economic power that this group can wield in terms of its ownership of economic resources, and the general influence that it has as an "interest group" (Miliband,1977:71). For Miliband the capitalist class is the strongest pressure group in the capitalist society, but this is not the same as saying that the state is an instrument of the capitalist class. Further, the pressure which business is able to apply on the government, is by no means the only explanation of the state's behaviour. Miliband cautions that to believe this is to leave too much else out of the equation (Miliband,1977:72).

The third answer relates to the nature of the state, which posits that the state is an instrument of the ruling class in a capitalist society because it has been placed in a capitalist mode of production. It cannot be anything else because the nature of the state is determined by the nature of the mode of production. "There are 'structural constraints' which no government, ... , can ignore or evade" (Miliband, 1977:72). Capitalist society has its own "rationality" to which every government will eventually have to surrender.

For Miliband the strength of this argument is that it explains why governments, in fact, behave as they do. The example he gives is that of a government that has pledged far-reaching reform prior to its election and has, indeed, won an election on that ticket. He posits that governments are seldom able to deliver these promises. This failing has often been attributed to "the personal failings of leaders, corruption, betrayal, the machinisations of civil servants and bankers, or a combination of all these" (Miliband,1993:73). He goes on to state that these

explanations may be correct, in part, but they need to incorporate the structural constraints within which governments find themselves, "within the context of a particular mode of production" (Miliband,1977:73). Miliband cautions against using this structural constraint as an all-encompassing excuse which deprives government of any independent action. Governments do act against these constraints, but to recognise them is to point to the "limits of reform" and to design a strategy against the mode of production which sets in place these constraints (Miliband,1977:73).

For Marxists, then, whatever their inclination, the state is dependent on capital. It was almost always act in the interests of the ruling class, which is the capitalist class. The state can be influenced by the capitalist class in a number of ways; sometimes the capitalist class is the government, sometimes the capitalist class merely influences the government, sometimes the state acts in the interests of capitalism as a whole and sometimes the state is dependent on capital because the state must allocate resources so as to protect those that are the producers of wealth in society. To use Marxism as an all-encompassing reason for the failure of the PSNP would be a mistake, and it would mean that the state can never act autonomously. Perhaps, though, the PSNP failed because the capitalists in our society, upon whom the government is dependent for investment, were willing to allow only a certain amount of money to be allotted to the PSNP and perhaps this amount was not sufficient to ensure that the programme was effective. The ANC did pledge widespread welfare reform prior to election and the owners of production in South Africa have only allowed them to do that to a limited extent. A more likely scenario in terms of the Marxist schools' contribution is that it is not in the capitalists interests to ensure that the PSNP is efficient. So as to ensure that the investors in South Africa continue to finance the state, the government has been forced to prioritise elsewhere, and this has meant a lack of real commitment to the PSNP.

2.8. The Weberian view - a state-centred approach

The state-centred approach conceives of the state as an institutional reality. In contrast to society-centred approaches, the state-centred approach argues that the state does in fact act in its own interests and is an actor in its own right. Max Weber's interest in the state is in the rise of a bureaucracy and the eventual move away from the awarding of office "on the basis of patrimony" and self-interest (Ferguson and Mansbach,1989:48). Weber recognised the problems of his own theory, admitting that not all societies had developed huge bureaucracies. Other scholars, like Held, have pointed out that Weber complicated his theory by including in his concept of bureaucracy, all large forms of organisation. Weber believed that all forms of organisation were becoming more and more bureaucratised, and the state was "continually in danger of being victimised by private interests" (Ferguson and Mansbach,1989:49). One of his main concerns was how bureaucratic power could be checked, and thus his conception of the state becomes almost pluralist.

According to Krasner, the state is an autonomous actor and cannot be viewed merely as a reflection of its society.
There is a modified version of the state-centred approach which argues that the state is "potentially autonomous" (Skocpol quoted in Bertramsen,1991:99). The state is no longer an agent of action but an institutional reality. Theorists take into account that because the state has goals it does not mean that it can necessarily achieve them. The ability to put into action state goals depends on the resources available to the state. A strong state can implement its own interests against the pressure of society because of the amount of resources it owns, but a weak state cannot carry out its own aims because of societal pressure and lack of resources. To sum up, the state is able to implement its goals if it has the resources available to do so (Bertramsen,1991:99).

Nordlinger, classified by Krasner as a fellow statist, sees the state as a group of individuals rather than some kind of phenomena. He sees all public officials as members of the state. He believes that the autonomy of the democratic state has been largely underestimated by state analysts. He posits that a states autonomy is determined by the correspondence between what it prefers and what its actions are, because too much emphasis has been placed on cases where state and societal preferences have diverged. He goes on to state that this emphasis ignores that state and societal preferences often converge. Further, when the state and its society diverge in their preferences, the state has enough resources at hand to bring societal preference in line with its own, or even to act contrary to this societal preference (Ferguson and Mansbach,1989:59). So why did the South African government embark on the PSNP in the first place, and why did they continue on the same path once it began to falter? Was it the government themselves who believed it would be a fruitful exercise, did they embark on the process because they believed that a sector of society wanted such a programme or where they indeed going against the interests of another sector of the society?

Nordlinger, in his arguments surrounding the nature of the state, embarks on a review of a number of other theories about the state. The people-centred approach holds that government is reliant on society for its approval and for its material resources. Resources are defined as "votes, clients, organisations, social status, professional expertise, wealth, control over financial, industrial and landed property" (Nordlinger, 1987:354). Once it is realised who best serves the government's aims it is easy to translate this into public policy.

A second view holds that governments enact their own policy opinions, turning its own perspective into policy. This view holds that governments act autonomously even when acting contrary to the interests of those that are best "politically endowed"

(Nordlinger, 1987:355). A third perspective espouses that the state acts autonomously only under certain circumstances. These are when, the capitalist class is divided on major political economic issues, the states' legitimacy as a class-neutral institution is in decline, social peace has broken down or is at risk of doing so, or capitalism's economic contradictions are intensified (Nordlinger,1987:357).

Nordlinger believes that "taking the state seriously" means more than just looking for instances when it acts autonomously. It means taking into account its outer limitations and addressing such questions as, how often do states act autonomously when those who hold political power in society are arrayed against them. It also means more than searching for examples of low and high autonomy. When one analyses the state as an independent variable one must question the validity and explanatory power of society-centred claims about the state (1987:358).

Whether intentional or not, some institutions make for effective opposition to the state. They impact people's political beliefs and attitudes and their level of political participation. They also impact people's divisiveness along racial, class and interest group lines. The state is embedded in society, so taking the state seriously also means analysing the relations within society, between the state and organisations or society as a whole (Nordlinger,1987:361).

An alternative theory, proposed by Nordlinger, suggests that government autonomy be gauged in terms of how well the state manages to negate societal demands. The greater the private resources behind those making the demands, and the better the state is able to withstand those demands, the greater its autonomy. Nordlinger reviews this theory with reference to other schools of thought, deciding that, in essence, they all reach the same conclusion. In Marxist terms, the state is relatively autonomous when it can overcome the demands of the dominant capitalist class. Krasner adds a second dimension,

stating that "the degree of societal change successfully engineered by the state" (Nordlinger,1987:364), determines its autonomy. So the states autonomy is not only determined by its ability to resist demands, but also by its ability to change behavioural patterns.

A point to remember at this stage is that sometimes the state's agenda will be in line with that of the civil society. This does not mean that the state is not autonomous. If officials make public policy with the support of society it is no less significant than if they were to do so without their mandate. Another interjection is that sometimes states make policy after they have been able to change societal preferences to be in line with their own. For Nordlinger this is still a strong state, even though they have not had to make policy in the face of adversity. The crux of the argument around autonomy for Nordlinger is that the measure of power is not the scope of change but the amount of societal support the state enjoys and the degree of opposition it overcomes, whatever its goals may be, "including the preservation of the status quo" (1987:366).

Nordlinger suggests a typology of states for analysing the autonomy of states, which includes four types of state: strong, independent, responsive and weak. Strong states enjoy high autonomy and support, they act regularly on their preferences and have support in doing so. Independent states have high autonomy, but lack support, they frequently translate their preferences into public policy despite societal preferences. Responsive states act in accordance with societal preferences. Weak states strive to act autonomously despite divergent societal views, but failing to do so rank low in both autonomy and support (Nordlinger, 1987:359).

For those who subscribe to a statist point of view, a states' autonomy depends on its ability to negate societal demands. The point for these theorists is that is that states often do act in their own interest and not in the interest of any particular

sector of the society. Another important point to remember is that because a government has goals it does not necessarily mean that it will achieve them.

2.9. Conclusion

The most pertinent insights that have been offered here in terms of why the PSNP failed and why, indeed, states behave as they do, are advanced by the Public Choice, Marxist and Weberian schools. For the Public Choice advocates the PSNP failed because the agents that were attempting to provide the service, were acting in their own interest, in that the government attempts to ensure re-election. Marxists would answer that the programme was perhaps not in the interests of the ruling class, whom the government always acts in the interests of, and that this meant a lack of commitment to the programme on the part of the government. For the Weberian school of thought, the government could have been acting in its own interests in implementing the PSNP or in the interests of others, but it did function autonomously. All of these theories offer important points as to the fact that the government was acting on its own agenda when it implemented the PSNP.

CHAPTER THREE

Nongovernmental Organisations

3.1. Introduction

At the United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995, NGOs were excluded from sending delegations on the grounds that they did not represent particular states. They argued that the problems faced by women today are no longer bound by borders and that these issues should be addressed across the board. In protest, they held their own conference alongside the United Nations seminar. It is the contention of this thesis that NGOs have a large role to play in the development of the world as a whole, that they can make up for or do better, or at least well, things that governments struggle to do.

3.2. What is a NGO?

Peter Willets prefers to use the term pressure groups when referring to NGOs, as he believes it best defines the way in which they seek to exercise influence. "They may try to bring about social change by the direct effect of their action on other individuals, by their impact upon other groups or by affecting government policy" (Willets,1982:1).

Willets categorises pressure groups into five types. Firstly, international "welfare agencies", run programmes to provide services to those who cannot afford them. Many of these agencies are highly specialised in their field. Previously these agencies would have no real contact with the country that they sent aid to, but it is becoming more prevalent, with a shift in development theory, to have a more grass-roots contact with those receiving aid, for example Oxfam and World Vision (Willets,1982:4).

Secondly, religious organisations are involved in the general promotion of values, an example of these types of organisations

is Women for Peace. Thirdly, communal groups are those which promote a certain segment of the population's interests, for example a women's group or ethnic group, an example of these kind of groups would be Inkatha when it was still a cultural movement. Fourthly, political parties are often seen as different from pressure groups in that they actually want to take office rather than influence the government of the day. But, according to Willets, this does not accurately describe how groups work in practice. If pressure groups have wide-spread support they can always convert into political parties, an example of this kind of organisation is the African National Congress. The last categorisation is the "specific-issue, promotional group" (Willets,1982:8). These groups are those that have sought to bring about social change on a particular issue by bringing about change in government policy. Usually they either raise new issues that have not entered the political agenda, or they try to change the way in which the issue is being handled. In so doing they try to influence the media and public opinion. These groups frequently communicate with other groups in other countries that are dealing with the same or similar issues, and often international NGOs are formed around the issues, an example of this is Greenpeace.

There are further distinctions to be made between types of NGOs.

1. NGOs in the North and those in developing countries
2. Organisations with a membership and those without
3. Grass roots groups and those NGOs that administer support to the grass roots.

Yet another way of classifying NGOs is by distinguishing between the reasons for their formation:

a) in response to crises,
b) in the name of development,
c) in opposition to a repressive government,

but all seem to have been formed as part of a "survival strategy" (Bebbington and Farrington,1993:201).

Korten classifies NGOs in four generations, distinguished by strategies for achieving development. First generation strategies involve NGOs in direct delivery of a service which aims to alleviate an immediate problem in the community. The NGO in this case relates directly to the person or group of persons it aims to assist. The aim of the NGO in these circumstances is to provide immediate relief from a situation of poverty, hunger or lack of health care. The service delivered depends entirely on the resources of the NGO (Korten, 1990:115). Examples of this kind of organisation are those started in response to the difficulties experienced after the Second World War; Catholic Relief Services, OXFAM and CARE.

Second generation strategies involve helping people to better equip themselves to meet their own needs. These strategies have in mind that the benefits will remain in the community long after the NGO has departed. The strategy attempts to empower local people. This kind of strategy calls on the NGO to play more of a mobilising role than to actually deliver services and the underlying assumption is that those living in situations of underdevelopment are able to empower themselves but they are unable to do so for some or other reason. Korten believes that in practice these strategies are little more than handouts in a "sophisticated guise" (Korten,1990:119).

Third generation strategies attempt to affect policy and seek changes on "local, national and global levels" (Korten, 1990: 120). When NGOs embark on third generational strategies it is because there is a realisation that second generational strategies "can never hope to benefit more than a few favoured localities" (Korten,1990:120). It seeks to formulate policy which creates sustainable development at the local level.

Fourth generation strategies move beyond formulation of policy, their aim is to "energise a critical mass of independent, decentralised initiative in support of a social vision" (Korten,1990:123). Korten concludes by positing that NGOs have

a new role in the international arena, and that is to become "facilitators of a global people's development movement" (Korten,1990:124).

Many scholars feel the need to develop a new breed of competent NGOs "capable of mobilising large numbers of people and channelling large sums of money to a variety of activities" (Uvin,1995:927) and these organisations should interact with the domestic state and international organisations. This process is called scaling up, which in essence means to increase the impact of grassroots organisations and their programmes.

Uvin defines scaling up in four forms. Firstly, quantitative scaling up means that the organisation expands its size by increasing its membership. This is the most self-evident kind of scaling up, indicating growth in its most basic form. This occurs when NGOs manage to attract increasing numbers of members into their fold. Secondly, functional scaling up is where a NGO increases the kinds of functions it embarks upon. Operation Hunger, for example, embarked upon this process in Tamboville when it started out as a nutritional project and expanded into job creation. Thirdly, political scaling up occurs when organisations direct their projects away from merely providing services to challenging the structural causes of underdevelopment. This usually involves relations with the state. Fourthly, organisational scaling up occurs when NGOs increase their organisational capacity so that they become more effective and efficient. This includes the growth of the organisation and ability to learn from the previous mistakes of the organisation (Uvin,1995:929).

A fifth indicator of scaling up is added to Uvin's previous analysis and is termed integration. This occurs when existing structures and networks of NGOs are taken over by others, in particular this refers to "government structures after it has demonstrated its potential" (Uvin,1995:931). This can come about through the demands of the NGO on the government or as a result

of independent state action. It is argued that this form of scaling up is often necessary for the sustainability of an NGO initiated programme. "It rarely occurs, however, for it goes against the ideological and organisational dynamics of most NGOs and governments (mutual distrust and a desire for exclusive control of operations...)" (Uvin, 1995:932). A recent example of this may be the contracting by the government of various NGOs to fulfil the policy objective of the PSNP.

Whether voluntary aid organisations falter due to lack of finance, almost all of them can categorised as "doers" (Stamp,1982:84). Few of these organisations aim to be primarily pressure groups.

3.3. The International dimension and relationship to state

Traditionally pressure groups have been relevant to the study of domestic politics, but they are becoming more influential in the international arena (Willets,1982:1). Stamp claims that the perception of state responsibility has changed dramatically in the last hundred years, so that we now expect the state to provide a host of services, ranging from medical services to education. In recent times this concept has been internationalised, so that we now have a responsibility for the welfare of humankind in general. However, it is still NGOs that provide these services in the developing countries. Some of these pressure the governments of a particular country to take responsibility for their citizens, but most simply provide the services themselves. "By influencing public opinion at home among donors and taxpayers, and in helping the poor in the receiving countries, they may ultimately be more effective" (Stamp, 1982:84).

In some areas NGOs have acquired significant status with international actors. Clark cites the international organisation Amnesty International, as one which grew in stature out of its humble beginnings of petitioning governments committing human

rights abuses. Amnesty International has now come to be a source of information for many other institutions, amongst them, the United Nations. There are other organisations that play similar roles. All of these organisations are bound by the fact that they attempt to influence government by "applying general human rights principals to particular situations" (Clark,1995:507). There are also a growing number of environmental groups seeking to ensure that governments adhere to international standards. Others organise development projects, funded by private contributors. Clark believes that these organisations have one main fact in common: that they "nearly always act in counterpoint with governmental actors" (Clark,1995:507).

Certain issue areas, like human rights and environmental issues, have started at a grass roots level and entered the international arena. So much so that they have come to be viewed as new "international actors that represent non-state interests" (Clark,1995:509).

In the future NGOs are likely to have more expertise and knowledge on their issues than any diplomat. NGO "faithfulness to principle" (Clark,1995:513) rather than to a particular interest or interest group gives them the potential for autonomous influence in the international arena. The interaction of NGOs may be said to form an international civil society that allows for grass-roots political participation around issues that the particular state does not cater for.

Historically, NGOs in the international sphere have been thought of in terms of expert consultants. Their presence at certain international conventions has allowed them to get their issues onto the agenda, at least, and to be part of international declarations, eg NGOs had a large impact on the UN's Women's (beijing) Conference, the UN's Conference on Population and Development and its' Earth Summit in Rio. The expertise provided by NGOs extends to "consultation on the drafting of particular texts formally advanced by states in intergovernmental

discussions" (Clark, 1995:517). Clark quotes Philip Alston as saying that NGOs can have great impact on government because it is now "increasingly difficult to stem the flow of information from local groups to international 'umbrella' human rights groups and international governmental monitoring bodies" (Clark, 1995:518).

In most complex societies a number of groups can arise around a single issue, often collaborating or exchanging information. NGOs, which are now included in more than a consultative capacity, at the UN strive for the responsibilities of the organisation to move beyond that of security. Previously, NGO delegations to the UN have sought to include "some provision for dealing with questions related to educational and cultural co-operation, human rights ... and to the economic and social area in general" (quoted in Willets,1982:11). Some authors claim that NGOs were directly responsible for the existence of the Charter's provision on human rights. It has now become standard practice to include NGOs in any UN proceedings. However, NGOs are often disgruntled by the international communities' unwillingness to take them seriously and have in the past split to hold their own conferences, as is evidenced by the Beijing Women's Conference.

The UN Charter was recently amended by Article 71, to augment a formal relationship between NGOs and the United Nations. The UN recognises any group that "declares themselves as such according to existing national procedures" (as quoted in Brett,1995:96) as an NGO. Wiseberg suggests that what distinguishes a human rights NGO from any other human rights organisation is that they not only seek human rights for their own members but for the society in general. Furthermore "a political group seeks to advance its own particular interests ... (a NGO) seeks to keep the political process open to all legitimate societal forces" (quoted in Brett,1995:97).

Paul Wapner believes that "transnational activists ... shape conditions which influence how their particular cause is

addressed" (Wapner,1995:311). Organisations like Amnesty International have changed human rights practices in particular countries. He believes that these organisations must be seen as political actors in their own right. The best way to look at transnational organisations is through the concept of 'world civic politics' (Wapner,1995:312). Civil society, according to Wapner's definition, is the area above the individual but below the state.

> It is a complex network of economic, social, and cultural practices based on friendship, family, the market, and voluntary affiliation (Wapner,1995:313).

He believes that this concept can be used in the global sense, as it transcends national boundaries. When NGOs direct their actions beyond the state, they politicise the global civil society.

Often, NGOs recognise that they are unable to challenge the state directly and therefore seek to influence actors in civil society other than the government. The state is not ignored, rather other channels are explored as "unofficial realms of collective action" (Wapner,1995:314). International NGOs often target the state to further their aims, but when this fails they turn to alternative transnational organisations. Problems that transcend national boundaries, like that of refugees and environmental issues need to be tackled in this way so as to ensure protection at the global level.

Scholars have argued that these organisations have had a marked effect on international problems. To sum up, the surge of transnational activity suggests that the state might not most accurately explain world events (Wapner,1995:317). Wapner distances himself from the "either/or" debate, saying that one does not have to decide whether the state is still the number one actor in international affairs, or if the NGO is eclipsing its role. He is more interested in understanding certain political action, rather than "ranking" the effectiveness of different agents in this action. If this is to be done, scholars will recognise that NGOs make a significant contribution to world

affairs, not only because they influence the state, but because they also influence the "behaviour of larger collectivities throughout the world" (Wapner, 1995:320). They do this by influencing the structures that govern global civil society.

3.4. Strengths

According to Sarah Tisch and Michael Wallace, the motivations of NGO's are primarily humanitarian.

> These organisations do not usually work in development to further the national interests of their home states, so they do not fit realist explanations of state-based development organisations (Tisch and Wallace, 1994:79).

NGO's are established to do what governments cannot or will not do, to further the needs of the citizens in any particular country. They go further to point out that NGO's have a history of being in touch with the communities they serve. This link is often established because NGO's have the opportunity of getting to know the people in that community and realise what kind of development is appropriate in that particular context. Because their aim is humanitarian and because of this link with the community, NGO's are often the best vehicles for providing socio-economic upliftment (Tisch and Wallace, 1994:80).

Stamp uses the British NGO Oxfam as an example of an organisation that "does". She quotes the field directors handbook as saying that the main aim of Oxfam working abroad is to respond to the needs of those that are suffering most in the host country. The aim of the organisation is to alleviate the suffering of the poorest in any society. But it seeks to do so by giving those poorest members of society the opportunity to take charge of the process of improving their living standards. Oxfam's projects aim to ensure that the poor "have more" and that they "be more", in terms of their confidence and ability to take control of their own lives (Stamp, 1982:91).

Some organisations may come to act as human rights NGOs at particular times, for example a doctors association may champion the rights of doctors not to become involved in the practice of

torture. Other organisations may become NGOs, whose role it is to "support the different local groups, but also advocate at the regional and international level on particular situations and issues" (Brett,1995:99). NGOs have come to function as the bridge between grass-roots practice and the institutions that are supposed to protect human rights.

Historically NGOs have relied on interstate relations to allow channels of communication. They have now devised channels of their own which allow them more freedom and have, in effect, created their own diplomatic networks. Concerns that have previously been the sole realm of the state are now being influenced by NGOs. This is partly due to the fact that they have been able to garner expertise through their "economic, informational and intellectual resources" (Clark,1995:508). Many NGOs can also claim legitimacy in terms of their popular support. Their impact on states is not a static phenomenon, but has changed over time and will continue to do so.

On the level of human rights, NGOs have been responsible for strengthening the expectation that states be held responsible for their human rights practices. According to Clark these changes have arisen not so much from "enthusiastic state participation as from international popular and diplomatic pressure exerted on governments" (Clark,1995:509). Human rights NGOs have been successful on two fronts, firstly by alerting the public as to human rights abuses and secondly by creating channels for their monitoring and eradication. It is also through this kind of activity that new norms are formalised.

Clark asks why NGOs are effective. NGO influence has grown because they are different from states: firstly because they can focus on a single issue while states have many functions to fulfil. Secondly, they often commit themselves to issues that states deem less important than the everyday running of that state. However, NGOs can draw on their grass-roots support to influence public opinion at the state level.

> The involvement of domestic actors allows NGOs to bring pressure on states internally, based on domestic representation and legitimacy, as well as internationally, based on humanitarian principles and generalised public opinion (Clark,1995:512).

Thirdly, NGOs commit themselves to their issues intensely. Their membership is less diverse on these issues than the citizens at the state level. Therefore the people working for the organisations are more devoted to their issue.

Bernstein goes on to state that the government has been "short-sighted" in its dealings with NGO's because, firstly, it was unable to spend its development budget because of delivery constraints, and secondly, because it is not utilising the capacity of NGO's to deliver. If the state has decided that it has no confidence in the NGO's to deliver, asks Bernstein, why has any money at all been allocated to them. Why do they not set up a totally new mechanism for dealing with the funds allocated to development? Bernstein believes that the NGO sector must "relentlessly push" the government for answers to these contradictions (Bernstein,1994). She says;

> SA is a richer, more effective, more democratic and more compassionate society because of the intricate network of organisations in the NGO sector. We must preserve this sector's innovation, pluralism, diversity and robust individualism (Bernstein,1994).

Much of the writing on the strengths of NGOs, has posited that they are better able to perform their tasks if they use a people-centred development strategy. It is important at this juncture to explain what is meant by this kind of strategy.

Korten summarises what is meant by the term people-centred development with the following quote:

> Development is a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilise and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations (Korten,1990:67).

This definition is contrary to that of the industrialisation development theories which hold that if there is growth in any given country, it means that development has taken place. Micro theories of development emphasise the process of development and holds to be true principles of "justice, sustainability and inclusiveness" (Korten,1990:68). It further points out that only people themselves can define what improvements to their lives are. The theory posits that people have to be empowered in their own environments and thereby will take responsibility for their own lives.

Katarina Tomasevski points out that development aid is different from foreign aid, as its main aim is to provide sustainable development. She claims that governments are still the main actors in aid, but they are no longer the only ones. Donors have increasingly been giving aid directly to NGO's. She sites the data on ODA; in the early 80s 5% of the aid was delivered by NGO's and by 1985 this figure had grown to 10% (Tomasevski, 1989:111). She believes that this has taken place for the same reasons as Bernstein does; donors prefer NGOs because of their "recognised ability" to reach local communities and access those that really need assistance, and because NGOs are known to be able to carry out development projects with less funding. One must not neglect the fact that often NGO projects receive much media attention, and this is also a reason for their increased access to development aid (Tomasevski,1989:111).

There are two theoretical views on development and human rights NGOs. The first is that development can never be depoliticised. Real development means that people become empowered and begin to make their own decisions on what is best for their own situations. The second view endorses that human rights is in the realm of exposing abuses of power, while development is succinct from this; providing economic upliftment. This can provide a political difficulty. Aid is therefore often granted to those organisations that do not challenge the authorities of the day

(Tomasevski,1989:114). Unless, of-course, those that grant the aid have as their aims the down fall of that particular state.

3.5. What are their limitations?

One of the limitations of NGO action is that governments are the only actors that can ensure that international conventions, as well as domestic law, are carried out. NGOs can attempt to persuade governments to provide these rights, but ultimately they cannot force them to ensure the rights, nor can they improve the situation themselves. Development NGOs are more able to ensure the latter, but in this instance resources play an important role.

"Organisations can either be viewed as a threat to an existing government system and labelled as subversive or they can be viewed as a useful watchdog and an activating and motivating force within society" (as quoted in Brett,1995:108). Willets agrees that political power is measured in the ability to mobilise legitimacy. He believes some NGOs, like Amnesty International, have more political power than any given government. They derive this power from their high international status and from the morally acceptable policies they are pursuing. NGOs are rarely cited as the reason that governments embark on policy change. However, when governments listen to the recommendations of NGOs, this is a measure of their respect for that NGO. As is the request from government for these recommendations (Brett,1995:109). Bernstein does caution us not to use the term NGO as interchangeable with civil society, it can not speak for society in general. She goes on to point out that what works in one small community may not work as a national policy for poverty alleviation. I would argue that such a blanket policy is not necessary. If it is possible to go into every small community through the NGO network and get to know that community and its specific needs, then there will be no need for national development plans, other than a budgeting and networking department to ensure that there is no duplication.

NGO's limitations include the fact that they often remain small and their research is often limited, as are their dissemination capabilities. Also, as they grow there is a lack of coordination and inter-NGO communication. There is a tendency for "...projects to remain very local and rarely address wider structural factors that underlie rural poverty" (Bebbington and Farrington, 1993:209). NGO work could be enhanced if access to technical services were enhanced and if there was more inter-organisational cooperation.

3.6. Conclusion

It is therefore the contention of this thesis that NGOs have strengths that governments do not. They have strong links to people living in the situations that they aim to improve. They have further links with one another to improve their own skills. They are usually committed to single issues, those that are most pertinent at any given time. They do not work towards personal gain in the form of garnering votes in their "constituencies". NGOs are established to perform the tasks that governments often cannot or will not do. Most importantly, they are equipped to perform the goals that they set out for themselves, and those that governments fail to achieve.

CHAPTER FOUR

Operation Hunger

4.1. Overview

This chapter is a review of the history of Operation Hunger as a South African non-governmental organisation that has been involved in food security issues for about 15 years. The organisation has, over the years, changed its focus, eventually coming to rest with the idea of a more holistic idea of development. This concept of development was reworked by Operation Hunger staff themselves and named the "integrated development programme" (Annual Report,1995/6). In terms of this the organisation hoped to move away from broad-based feeding and move in line with the RDP and micro theories of development.

Operation Hunger does its best to work with a number of non-governmental organisations and the state to ensure participation in broad-based development (Food for Thought,1995:9). This, of-course, was not true of the dealings with the state during the Apartheid era. Shelver believes that OH was very unpopular with the government (Interview 3). This was extended to a ridiculous extent when a Conservative Party MP accused OH of paying for Winnie Mandela's cosmetic surgery at a time when the ANC was the government's prime enemy (The Citizen,10.03.93). Later, in 1991, when then Minister of Health, Dr Rina Venter established her feeding fund, the old frictions with the government arose again. The government's main objection to OH's application for funds was that it intended to allocate funds only on a regional level, and OH had applied on a national level. Operation Hunger was not willing to apply on a regional level, because they believed that this reinforced the Homeland system (Perlman,15.10.92). OH eventually received funding from the regional Department of Health (National Nutrition and Social Development) in 1994 and this allowed OH to feed until the PSNP was introduced. After

this, funding for feeding was restricted to community or pre-

school programmes (Shelver, Interview 3).

It is extremely difficult to capture the vitality and tenacity of this organisation, its history spanning almost two decades but I hope to do justice to the people involved in Operation Hunger in this chapter, in explaining just how they attack hunger and malnutrition in South Africa. [4]

4.2. The History of Operation Hunger

Operation Hunger's mission statement reads thus:

> Operation Hunger creates partnerships between vulnerable people to combat malnutrition, which when suffered by children, undermines the Nation's Health, Education and Economic Potential (OH, Annual Report 1995/6).

This mission has not always been implemented in the same fashion, and it is important to investigate how the organisation has developed over the years, in response to the changes that have occurred in South Africa and to an internal review process that indicated they were not fulfilling their self-appointed role.

The mission contained in the current annual report is, in fact, only two years old. Before this, there was no formally declared mission statement. The organisation's main objectives were two-fold; in the short-term to provide hunger relief through feeding schemes, and in the long-term to establish self-help projects (OH Annual Report,August 1980-March 1982). The organisations that OH formed partnerships with was, and continues to be, widely based and include other NGOs, development organisations, funding partners, the corporate sector, private individuals, communities and, latterly, the government (Shelver, Interview 3).

Prior to 1994 those that became recipients of OH aid referred to

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[4]Much of the information contained in this chapter was gained from a number of interviews with Operation Hunger staff and volunteers involved in work in the actual communities. This relationship is based on a number of visits that I undertook as a journalist for a news agency.

any one individual, family, pre-school, primary-school, grouping within a community (eg. TB patients) or the whole community who felt that they needed food support. At that stage, nutritional vulnerability applied to hunger, and not nutritional status as it does today. OH's self-appointed mandate in the Apartheid era was to provide vulnerable people with services that the state would not provide them with. At this stage, because of a number of circumstances, for example forced removals and the poor state of affairs in the homelands and townships, the main problem that OH faced was the provision of food to millions of starving people. A review process revealed that this kind of broad-based feeding did not address the root of the problems that most South Africans faced every day. This review process will be discussed more fully later in the thesis.

Operation Hunger was established in response to probably the worst drought in South African history under the auspices of the Institute for Race Relations (SAIRR).[5] The organisation was led for almost 12 years by executive director Ina Perlman, who had seen the abject poverty in which most Africans lived during her work for the SAIRR. As it grew, offices were established in Johannesburg, and later in East London. The East London office grew out of necessity with the independence of the Ciskei, and the South African state's unwillingness to deal with its poverty. Eventually there were offices in almost every main city in South Africa, covering most regions.

4.3. Funding

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[5]The institute was founded in 1929 and the two main objectives of its constitution were as follows:

> "(a) To work for peace, goodwill and practical co-operation between the various sections of the populations of South Africa.
> (b) To initiate, support, assist and encourage investigations that may lead to greater knowledge and understanding of the racial groups and of the relations that subsist or should subsist between them"

(Hellmann, 1979:4).

Fundraising, considering the amount of people OH was feeding every day in South Africa, was always problematic for the organisation. In 1986 OH started its Gold Rush fundraising campaign and, before the era of the scratch card, this was extremely lucrative. Gold Rush was a lottery type competition. In the beginning it was very successful, but when a quiz, televised to finalise the end of the Gold Rush 2 competition, was badly bungled, the image of the competition was damaged. Nevertheless, it was still an extremely good earner for OH. In total there were 15 Gold Rush competitions, the last one ending in 1994. Each competition was launched with a large event and ended with one, always very glamorous, and obviously meant to serve as a contrapuntal picture to the face of hunger (The Star,22.08.88). One of the most important features of Gold Rush was that it produced money for unspecified use, like administrative costs, which donors are often reluctant to fund (Shelver, Interview 3).

One of the main problems with broad-based feeding is that it is expensive. The budget for the Eastern Cape was over one million rand a month, feeding approximately 150 to 300 thousand people. There were nine other regions in South Africa with similar budgets (Annual Report, 1992/3).At the time that OH began its programme evaluation most NGOs in South Africa faced a funding crisis. Before Apartheid began to disintegrate and the "newly elected government was in place the burden of development fell on the fragmented shoulders of a multitude of community-orientated NGOs" (23.07.93). These NGOs had to look to outsiders for funding, because their work was usually contrary to that of the Apartheid state. With the implementation of the RDP, the NGOs have been stripped of their original function. NGOs have been invited to work alongside and together with the new dispensation, but are suspicious, by their nature, of government and believe their strength lies in their independence. To receive funding from the government would turn these organisations into parastatals (Daily Dispatch,23.07.93).

Gavin Stewart, Editor of the Daily Dispatch, backs this view. He points out that during the Apartheid years a special kind of NGO multiplied in South Africa. Because the whole world supported their cause they were able to collect substantial amounts of money. By one estimate the NGO sector collected R1 000 million a year and employed 2 million workers. A considerable slice of this money came from foreign governments. "Now that the noble cause has been won and the world sees a government that can do no wrong, money for good causes is much more difficult to find" (Daily Dispatch, 25.11.94). In 1994 the European Union donated R440 million to South Africa, all of this was channelled through the RDP. Those NGOs that in the past had depended on European governments for funding, had to depend on the government of South Africa. The EU's decision "will take some power from the people and give more to the government, (and) ...as experience should have taught us, they are not the same thing" (Daily Dispatch,25.11.94).

In 1993, Operation Hunger underwent a review process, to assess the impact of the feeding that had been taking place. It seemed that there was no end in sight for broad-based feeding.[6] At one stage Operation Hunger was feeding two million people a day (Annual Report,1992-1993). The feeding schemes had grown beyond all manageable proportions. The organisation began to ask pertinent questions about itself in terms of the real impact it was making in South Africa. Were they feeding the right people? Was the food that they were supplying sufficiently nutritious that it made an impact? Was the food reaching the people continually?

What Operation Hunger had managed to do was to gain itself a favourable reputation as being able to communicate with communities at the grass roots level. In a statement to the Press in 1991, the British Embassy justified its' funding to

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[6]This term means that there is no nutritional research or targeting conducted, but rather that any person or group that seeks for help is given food.

Operation Hunger by saying that the organisation:

> ...delivers practical assistance to the poorest of the poor in South Africa. Last year they fed 1.4 million people across this country. In our experience it has also proved most effective in promoting community development in rural areas... (as quoted in The Citizen,14.02.91).

The review process in the Eastern Cape began from the point of view that it was one of the most impoverished and underdeveloped regions in the country.

4.4. Operation Hunger - Eastern Cape

Operation Hunger quotes the following statistics from the Development Bank of South Africa to illustrate its point.

Population (1993)	6 665 400
Population growth	2,6%
Unemployment	23,6%
Personal Annual income	R1 358
Life expectancy	59,6 years
Human development index	0.48%[7]
Infant mortality	58.2 per 1 000 infants

(Operation Hunger Report,1994:3)

The area that Operation Hunger provides to in the Eastern Cape includes the former Transkei and Ciskei, the region known formerly as the Eastern Cape, Border and the Karoo. It has been feeding in the region since 1986, and in late 1993 was feeding approximately 500 000 people (Operation Hunger Report,1995:4).

After the review process was concluded in the Eastern Cape, the report stated:

> A development approach is required to address the problem of long-term nutritional vulnerability. Such a development strategy must consider a wide range of

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[7] This indicator is used by the UN as a development programme measure based on life expectancy, adult literacy and income. It has a maximum index of 1.0

> factors that undermine household health. These would include issues of food security, access to clean water, sanitation, a healthy environment, and appropriate child and maternal care (Operation Hunger Report,1995:4).

It was further concluded that the mere delivery of food may not address the root cause of food insecurity. The fundamental causes of the crisis situation in South Africa at the time can be put down to, "redundancies in the mines employing rural workers, overcrowding, overgrazing, deforestation and a general lack of development" (Sowetan,19.07.91). One must at this stage take into account the fact that the people of the Eastern Cape, especially those living in the former homelands fell prey to these circumstance because of the policies of Apartheid and the unwillingness of the former government to provide basic services. A more holistic strategy was therefore needed to enhance the household's ability to acquire food. In late 1994 OH (nationally) started a process of referring old feeding scheme locales to other organisations involved in feeding.

It was intended that any feeding done by Operation Hunger in the future would be done at sites where the new development strategy was being employed. Feeding would be strictly targeted to children in the 0-6 age group (who would receive at least two-thirds of their nutritional RDA), lactating mothers and those on TB medication. These target groups are the most nutritionally vulnerable, because:

(a) Up to the age of six the human body needs a multiplicity of nutrients essential for the spurt of growth experienced in this age group.
(b) Lactating mothers need nutritional supplement because many of their vital nutrients leave the body during breast-feeding.
(c) Tuberculosis medication induces vomiting if taken on any empty stomach.

All current projects will be assessed in terms of their sustainability, meaning that the community will eventually take

ownership of the projects themselves. OH will on this basis decide whether it should continue its support of these projects.

In 1994, OH (Eastern Cape) was asked if it would run a number of soup kitchens in the Port Elizabeth area under the auspices of the National Nutrition and Social Development Programme (NNSDP). The beneficiaries of this scheme would be those who were not attending pre-school or creche in the 0-6 years age category. Using its grass roots links with previous feeding sites, OH embarked on a process of identifying those most in need of support. Informal settlement areas were chosen and by the end of December 1994, 30 soup kitchens existed. By September 1995 there were 44, which meant that Operation Hunger was feeding 14 798 people in the area a day (Shelver,1995:1). These kitchens operated mainly out of community member's own kitchens and were open Mondays to Fridays. OH ensured that the food was promptly delivered and a food parcel incentive was offered to people who helped in the kitchens (Shelver,Interview 1).

The NNSDP began to insist that targeting be controlled more strictly and it was decided that there be more emphasis on women in the rural areas. The decision began to take effect during South Africa's transition to democracy, while various stakeholders were at the negotiating table and once there was a general consensus that the reigns of power would be handed over to those that had been democratically chosen to govern. The ANC had released a working document, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), that it would use as a guideline to address the imbalances that had been created by Apartheid. Most organisations and government departments, as well as the corporate sector, quickly brought themselves in line with the policy programme. By the time the Government of National Unity took power, with the ANC at its helm, the RDP policy document was being consulted so as to give direction to most development programmes.

The RDP subscribed to a vision of development that was holistic and inclusive, and emphasised that those that had previously been left out of the Apartheid state's development agenda, be consciously included. One of its main visions is the advancement of the needs of rural women, stating:

> The role of women within the RDP requires particular emphasis. Women are the majority of the poor in South Africa. Mechanisms to address the disempowerment of women and boost their role within the development process and economy must be implemented. The RDP must recognise and address existing gender inequalities as they affect access to jobs, land, housing etc (RDP,1994).

Operation Hunger's Eastern Cape pilot site, Tamboville, provides greater insight into OH's method of operation.

4.5. Tamboville - OH's Eastern Cape pilot site

Tamboville, or Tambo as it is known to the villagers, is situated just outside Wittlesea, close to Queenstown.
The land that the villagers are living on now was Tribal Trust Land. They have recently been awarded the rights to the land on which they are living, and are negotiating ownership on the other side of the national road, as the village is contained by its size. The village is divided into 779 plots, which are 50 x 50 m in size. At first Tambo had 6 communal toilets and 2 communal water taps. Most of the homes have been electrified. In order to gain ownership of a piece of land in Tambo, one has to go through an application process, and the criterion for winning such an application is the ownership of some kind of raw materials for building a structure. There is an executive committee in the village, that interestingly has only two men on it (Operation Hunger Report,1995:10).

When the people first moved into Tambo in 1991, they approached Operation Hunger, partly because they come from such diverse backgrounds; some come from the former Transkei, others come from the surrounding villages, to start a community feeding scheme at the informal pre-school. This was done just after the first people starting moving there in 1991. 70,3% of the people living

in Tambo were recipients of food (Operation Hunger Report,1995:61). Tambo presented a very unique opportunity for Operation Hunger to try out its' new programmes and it became the Eastern Cape's pilot study.

Operation Hunger was very fortunate in that there were a number of other role players who participated in its Tamboville project. For example; The Independent Development Trust (IDT) and Cape Provincial Administration (CPA) conducted the water programme. This meant that OH could concentrate on health and nutritional programmes, as well as a certain measure of income generation. Operation Hunger started off with a an intensive assessment programme which was quantitative in its nature. This fed into a sample questionnaire, going on to focus discussions and various other participative methodologies, to try and get the villager's view of themselves. This was also done to asses whether Tambo would indeed be an appropriate site for Operation Hunger's testing of their new development strategies.

There are two Operation Hunger fieldworkers living just outside the village, one of whom is a registered nurse and social worker. These fieldworkers and Ms Shelver believe that the community has accepted them, mainly because they have been committed to the community for almost two years. But they have always foreseen that they would gradually withdraw from Tambo, as they people become more equipped to take the projects over by themselves. For Shelver, staying in the community for ever would certainly not mean development has occurred. The participative methodology used by Operation Hunger in drawing conclusions about the community at Tambo, reflects an attitude that the organisation takes seriously the opinions and needs of that community and this helps to ensure a projects' sustainability, because there is a real sense of ownership by the people that the project aims to serve.

The fieldworkers see as one of their best achievements the setting up of the nutrition unit. They have been training members

of the community to survey the nutritional status of the children in that community. The Department of Health backs them up in this aim, trying to move away from mere feeding schemes to more integrated developmental nutritional programmes. Operation Hunger has found that often if there is no food provided for children in the school setting, the parents will not send their children to school. Once Operation Hunger stopped broad-based feeding at the schools in Tambo, the old Ciskei government gave food parcels to the community on an irregular monthly basis. When the food was finished the mothers did not send their children to the pre-school any more. Shelver believes that this is not a unique experience (Interview 1). The fieldworkers have moved away from Tambo and the programmes seem to working on their own. The community health workers who were trained by Operation Hunger are continuing with their nutritional surveillance and education around malnutrition and disease. The garden which was started adjacent to the unit has not yielded much in terms of crops because of the lack of water. It is hoped that with the spring rains the women working in the unit will be able to gain more from the garden. The brick-making, and fence-making, to a lesser degree, projects are continuing successfully, with the workers now drawing profits (Ms Nombulelo Moss, Interview 5).

4.6. What do the people of Tambo need?

In 1994 Operation Hunger fieldworkers reported that an overwhelming number (1:4) of the children in Tambo were stunted (Operation Hunger Report,1995:62). In the Eastern Cape as a whole, the results of anthropometric testing (that was part of the Operation Hunger's internal review process) showed that, the previous 11 years of broad-based feeding had no impact at all on the nutritional status of the children, who had been recipients of OH food aid (Annual Report,1994-1995). [8]

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[8]According to the data collected by OH staff, 25% of children under the age of six years at Tambo, fell below the 3rd centile height/weight for age (Shelver,interview 3).There are basically three categories of nutritional status. The first and second categories, falling between the 50th and 97th centiles,

Once OH had collated this data and went back to the community with what they had found, there seemed to be fairly total acceptance of it. The villagers admitted freely that they were too poor to provide their children with the food that was necessary to ensure that they remained healthy. The people living in Tambo perceived the following to be the means to combat poverty; "gardens, so that they could sell vegetables, sewing, brick-making, poultry, fencing, and pig breeding" (Operation Hunger Report,1995:49) Operation Hunger therefore embarked on a process of implementing the programmes that the community saw as beneficial to them.

The point to be made is a simple one. Operation Hunger had been involved in feeding similar to that which the PSNP has recently embarked upon, for 11 years. Once they evaluated their programme they realised that broad-based feeding had no nutritional impact. They realised further that the root cause of this nutritional vulnerability was complex. The lack of; sanitation, access to jobs, land and water and a host of other social services, are to blame for these villager's, and other South Africans like them, inability to provide sufficiently nutritious meals for their children.

4.7. Conclusion

It is nothing short of ludicrous to assume that the provision of a peanut-butter sandwich could alleviate the plight which the people of Tamboville find themselves in. However, were organisations like Operation Hunger, or indeed the government,

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in a village like Tambo, would include those children that have no problems with malnutrition and it means that their weight:height:age ratios are in proportion. Falling below the 50th centile denotes danger, and means that there has to be some kind of nutritional intervention, but it is not life-threatening at this stage. If a child begins to fall below the third centile mark it probably means that the child is either ill or is stunted. It is the ideal to hope that only 3% of any given population fall below this mark (Department of Health, Road to Health card: issued at all South African clinics).

to provide sanitation, water pumps, brick-making utensils, vegetable seeds and education and support around nutritional issues, as they have done in Tambo, nutritional vulnerability could properly be addressed.

Table 1: Reflecting Operation Hunger's Feeding Figures 1980-1995

Year	Fed Nationally	Fed Regionally	Money Collected
1980 - 1982	50 000		R 230 811
1982 - 1983	500 000		R 1 800 000
1983 - 1984	600 000	106 573	R 3 000 000
1984 - 1985	652 000		R 5 036 884
1985 - 1986	957 000		R 5 432 469
1986 - 1987	1 000 000	405 395	R12 866 591
1987 - 1988	1 300 000	451 914	R14 600 000
1988 - 1989	1 350 000	357 685	R15 596 671
1989 - 1990	1 396 041	381 977	R16 521 237
1990 - 1991	1 391 910	446 270	R18 106 845
1991 - 1992	1 848 509	420 467	R30 579 243
1992 -1993	2 407 642	712 351	R34 876 846
1993 - 1994		400 000	R35 881 428
1994 - 1995	4 180 344	400 000	R35 703 840

Note: The figures above are collected from the annual reports of Operation Hunger and from The Star (22.12.90). Some figures are unavailable for some years. The table is intended to show the sporadic increase and decrease in the amount of people Operation Hunger was feeding at any one time.

Conclusion

The fact that children have received food in the Eastern Cape, would mean, by some definitions, that development has taken place. However, there are a number of questions which remain unanswered. It is the contention of this thesis the problems of nutrition and education, and development on the whole, can better be addressed by NGOs active at the grass roots level. This contention is held because of the more general belief that NGOs develop for development's sake and governments develop so that they gain the favour of their constituents.

The most pertinent insights offered by the theories studied in this thesis, are advanced by the Public Choice, Marxist and Weberian schools. For the Public Choice school of thought, the PSNP failed because the government was acting in its own interest, in a bid to ensure re-election. Marxists would answer that the programme was not in the interests of the ruling class and that this means a lack of commitment to the programme on the part of the government. For the Weberian school of thought, it is imaterial that the government could have been acting in its own interests in implementing the PSNP, the fact is that it did function autonomously. All of these theories offer important points as to the fact that the government was acting in its own interest when it implemented the PSNP.

It is the contention of this thesis that NGOs have strengths that governments do not. The most important of these strengths is the fact that they do not work towards personal gain in the form of garnering votes in their "constituencies". NGOs are established to perform the tasks that governments often cannot or will not do. Most importantly, they are equipped to perform the goals that they set for themselves, and those that governments often fail to achieve.

It is clear that the PSNP was not implemented according to its

blueprint. Ultimately, the PSNP brought sandwiches to primary school children, but did little to ensure real empowerment in the communities. This kind of programme can never alleviate the plight which the people of Tamboville, or any other community in South Africa, find themselves in. However, a more holistic concept of development could ensure that people become more involved in their own development and that means that nutritional vulnerability could properly be addressed.

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