

THE TRANSKEI

Real meaning of independence

JOHN KANE-BERMAN

SUPPORTERS of apartheid like to use the language of decolonisation when they talk of the forthcoming independence of the Transkei.

The mysterious "Club of Ten" recently placed advertisements in British newspapers to the effect that "in the case of the Transkei, South Africa is now set to restore an injustice of British colonial policy by granting its people the same dignity of nationhood as Britain happily accorded to Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.

The Club of Ten's view of South African history is perhaps a little peculiar. The most important aspect of Transkei independence is not what the South African Government purports to be giving to Xhosa-speaking Africans (independence, "nationhood"), but what it is taking away from them.

It is the final act in a process of confiscation which began with the Natives Land Act of 1931, one of the principal purposes of which was to prevent Africans from acquiring further land from Whites in rural areas outside the African "reserves".

In terms of this and other statutes, South Africa was divided into "White" areas (comprising some 87 per cent of the country, including all the economically developed parts), and Bantustans (comprising the remainder).

Whites and Africans were prohibited from acquiring land in each other's areas. Africans were never consulted about this inequitable carving up of the land.

This neat idea of geographical segregation encounters two great obstacles, however.

First, even before the Union of South Africa was constituted in 1910, Africans had been acquiring land in rural areas which were later declared to be "White".

The Government has attempted to remove this first obstacle by its policy of resettlement, which entails the forced removal of African rural communities from "Black spots" in "White" areas and their deportation to places like Dimbaza in the Bantustans.

The second problem arises from the fact that the opening of the diamond and gold mines and subsequent industrialisation resulted in the movement of Africans, no less than Whites, to the towns and cities.

Today, there are more Africans in the "White" areas than in the Bantustans and many more Africans than Whites in the "White" areas, while Africans comprise nearly three-quarter of the country's 9.7 million working population.

The most logical and sensible course would have been for urban Africans to be allowed to settle permanently in the cities along with the Whites and be incorporated in a multi-racial political system. But White governments have never been prepared to permit this.

Instead, they set about instituting policies to attempt to halt and even reverse the inevitable consequences of industrialisation and urbanisation.

One of the keys to policy on city Africans is to be found in the report of the Transvaal Local Government (or Stallard) Commission in 1922: "If the native is to be regarded as a permanent element in municipal areas there can be no justification for basing his exclusion from the franchise on the grounds of colour.

"The native should be allowed to enter the urban areas when he is willing to minister to the needs of the White man, and should depart therefrom when he ceased so to minister."

Since then, the main thrust of Government policy towards urban Africans has been geared to the systematic implementation of the Stallard doctrine, although of course many aspects of policy (such as pass laws and the migratory labour system) date back earlier.

The migratory labour system has been extended. Since the war the number of migrant workers has grown faster than the number of economically active Africans; by 1970, 60 per cent of the African men working in "White" areas were migrants.

The pass laws have also been tightened up: they are used both to limit the number of Africans coming to the cities and to reduce the numbers already there.

Africans in the cities are regarded as "temporary sojourners". When they are no longer required to minister to White needs — perhaps when they are sick or old — they must go "back" to the "homelands".

In reality of course, there is frequently no "back" about it, and the term "homeland" is a misnomer. Researchers at the apartheid-support-

ing Africa Institut^d in Pretoria have estimated that 80 per cent of the South African-born Africans in "White" urban areas have the "demographic characteristics" of a settled population.

City Africans no more regard themselves as Bantustanians than Afrikaners regard themselves as Hollanders.

City Africans — and even Bantustan leaders — have said that they regard South Africa as a whole as their homeland.

Whatever rural tribal links city Africans may once have had have withered away during the process of urbanisation. City Africans work with modern machinery, wear modern clothes, listen to Western music, play Western sports, and watch British and American films.

Of course, the Nationalists do not literally mean that each and every African must leave what ministers fondly like to call the "White homeland". Farms, White households, offices, hotels, shops, factories, mines, the railways, the post office, and electricity supply industry, and even the Government's own bureaucracy could not survive without them.

What the Government is seriously trying to achieve, however, is the translation of every single African in the "White" areas into a foreigner. It can then legitimate its refusal to accede to their demands for the vote and other political rights by the device of saying they are aliens, present in those areas only a "guest workers".

This policy is consistent with the Stallard doctrine. Ambassador Pik Botha's promise to the United Nations at the end of 1974, that "we shall do everything in our power to move away from discrimination based on race or colour" (my italics) also ties in with Stallard.

Denying city Africans the vote or subjecting them to the pass laws is of course as much discrimination as is "petty apartheid". But while doing away with some aspects of the latter — such as throwing open a few park benches to Africans or allowing the handful that can afford it into the Nico Malan Opera House — the Government can maintain the real stuff of discrimination, but rationalise it on ostensibly non-racial grounds.

The trick is simply to make city Africans foreigners. Mr Botha will then be able to tell the United Nations that South Africa has done away with discrimination based on race and colour.

His speech would go something like this: "We concede that the Bantu in the 'White' areas are subject to certain disabilities, but, after all, they are foreigners, working temporarily in our cities as guest workers.

No country can be expected to give the franchise and other political rights to aliens..."

This is where Transkei independence comes in. It is the ultimate refinement of the Stallard doctrine, the final solution.

In terms of the Transkei Constitution Act of 1963, all Xhosa-speaking South Africans (other

than those who supposedly have some "ethnic" link with the Ciskei, whose turn will no doubt come too) are citizens of the Transkei.

This applies irrespective of whether they are living there, whether they have ever been there, or whether they wish to be Transkeians.

The draft constitution of the independent state-to-be provides that all these citizens of the present Transkei will automatically become citizens of the independent Transkei.

The 1963 Act did not, however, deprive these Transkei citizens of their South African citizenship. But the Status of the Transkei Act, recently enacted by the South African Parliament, does just that.

This is the final step in the process of confiscation: first the land, with its vast mineral wealth and its riches which Africans have helped to create; now any claim to it that they might have had as South African citizens.

Both the 1.6 million Xhosas actually living in the Transkei and the 1.3 million non-Ciskei Xhosas living in the rest of the country will lose their South African citizenship on independence day.

On this question, the draft constitution and the Status Act complement one another. The claim by Paramount Chief Matanzima that Xhosas outside the Transkei will have a choice of whether to become Transkei citizens or not, conflicts with what his own draft constitution says.

The only people whose citizenship may be in doubt are the relatively small number of "borderline cases", whose "ethnic" status is not clear — such as children of a Xhosa mother and a non-Xhosa father. Their citizenship will be decided by a kind of "ethnic classification board".

Chief Matanzima is thus collaborating with the South African Government in its design to strip even the Xhosas who live in "White" areas of their South African citizenship. They are likely to accuse him of having sold them down the river.

If the other Bantustans decided to become independent, the effect will be similar. Just as the Transkei Constitution Act of 1963 makes Xhosas citizens of the Transkei, so the Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act of 1970 makes all the other Africans in the country citizens of one or another Bantustan. But they are still South African citizens.

If the Bantustan leaders and Pretoria "do a Transkei on them" as well, they too will be stripped of their South African citizenship.

From Pretoria's point of view, there is no purpose in making the Bantustans independent unless they take all the Africans in "White" areas under their citizenship wing.

Pressures from Pretoria on the other Bantustans to opt for independence are likely to become greater and greater. Once the Transkei is independent, it appears that its citizens will have privileged treatment in "White" areas.

Mr M. C. Botha, the Minister of Bantu Ad-

ministration and Development, said in Parliament recently that "Bantu persons who identify themselves with their own Black nations are much more welcome here in the White area than those who deny or hide their relationship with a Black nation of their own... We must grant (them) more and more privileges".

They would, he said, be given preference in jobs, housing, having dependants with them, freedom of movement, hospitalisation, transport, schools, sport, etc.

Mr Botha also said that in future citizenship would be a more important qualification to stay in "White" areas than Section 10 of the Bantu (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act.

It is clear that the Nationalists are going to leave no stone unturned in their desire to make each and every African in South Africa a foreigner in the land of his birth. Will the other Bantustan leaders be able to resist pressures to go the way of the Transkei?

The honorary personal representative of Chief Gatsha Buthelezi in the United Kingdom, Mr

P. V. Tulisizwe Mbatha, said in a recent letter to a British newspaper: "I hereby plead with the community of nations not to recognise the Transkei as a sovereign state".

A recent editorial in the *Financial Mail* said that foreign governments "should tell Mr Vorster that if he goes ahead with plans unilaterally to take away from those Xhosas living in White areas their South African citizenship, they will not recognise the new state".

International isolation of the Transkei will prevent other Bantustan leaders from following in Chief Matanzima's footsteps.

As long ago as 1923, an African leader said of the racial division of the land in South Africa: "We have contributed to the progress and advancement of this country. We have sacrificed many lives in the mines, we have built this city, we have built the railways, and we claim that we should have a place in South Africa."

If the United States and the European countries endorse that claim, they have no choice but to blacklist the Transkei.

Historical perspective

ANN BERNSTEIN

IN creating Bantustans with their own internal political hierarchy the Government was attempting to shift African political aspirations from the urban areas to the limited tribal environment, thus lessening the pressures for accommodation from Blacks within the "flash-points" of South Africa — the multi-racial industrial cities.

The Transkei constitutional act of 1963 created a Transkei Legislative Assembly comprising 64 chiefs as ex-officio members and 45 elected commoners by universal adult suffrage.

The Act authorised a cabinet of six holding the portfolios of Chief Minister and Finance, Education, Justice, Interior, Agriculture and Roads and Forestry. The control of Defence, Foreign Affairs, the Police and Magistracy, Information, Post and Telegraphs, Health, Railways, Criminal Justice and White Residents of the Transkei remained with the Republic.

In addition the state of emergency declared during the rebellion in 1960 remained in force and has never been lifted. This proclamation 400 gives the police arbitrary powers of search and detention, while the chiefs are given control of the right to hold meetings in their districts and are also empowered to banish people from their areas.

In 1963 the anti-apartheid Chief Poto and his supporters won 33 out of the 45 elected seats

against Matanzima and his followers but nevertheless Matanzima was elected Chief Minister of the Transkei because of the overwhelming support of the nominated chiefs.

From all accounts the election demonstrated the tremendous opposition of the local people to the apartheid policies that directly affected their lives and also to the collaboration of most chiefs with the Government in their implementation of these policies.

In 1968, however, the TNIP led by Matanzima was to win 28 of the 45 elected seats and 44 per cent of the 809 000 votes cast while the opposition Democratic Party won 14 seats with 292 000 votes, the remaining three seats going to independents. Why the tremendous swing to the TNIP?

From 1964 to 1966 the events in the Transkei appeared to confirm the Government's hopes. The TNIP repeatedly praised the Government and asserted its support for separate development, attacked "Ghana communism", proclaimed the right of the chiefs to rule and expressed the hope that eventual independence would be achieved after the requisite economic development of the region.

Matanzima repeatedly stated the need for the races to live apart and he was also totally in favour of South African police action against

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his more militant opponents and often actively encouraged Government repression.

The DP on its side vehemently rejected separate development, opposed the possible balkanisation of the country and objected to the new role which the TLA gave to the region's traditional aristocracy. In a totally unequal contest they were forced to debate the morality of apartheid in the institutions which were themselves the creation of such a policy, and where their very actions vindicated the scheme they opposed.

In 1966 the TNIP Chief Whip, Shadrack Samba, resigned from the party after it refused to support his call for the immediate independence of the Transkei, and he subsequently formed the Transkei People's Freedom Party which demanded immediate independence for the Transkei and characterised Government policy as oppressive.

This resulted in a change of strategy for Matanzima. He was now vulnerable on two sides, on the one hand he supported apartheid and was criticised for this and on the other he was criticised for supporting White domination rather than Black independence.

This forced him publicly to become far more hostile to the Pretoria government — on the issues of influx control, education under the Bantu Education system and the position of Whites in the Transkei. He found that a most successful line was one of posturing himself as a Black nationalist within the separate development formula.

He demanded Port St. Johns, called for the Africanisation of the civil service and repeated his demands for more rapid economic development.

It is not easy to ascertain the reasons for Matanzima's success. His personal claim that the people of the Transkei had now seen the light is probably only half the truth. The TNIP admittedly offered voters some kind of hope and a goal, independence, a factor which probably attracted some voters but certainly not in such numbers.

Various other reasons can be put forward. Matanzima now held control of the reigns of government, the civil service officials who were the electoral officers were all his supporters. The vast majority of chiefs who held some sway over their tribesmen also supported him.

Furthermore the majority of the electorate are illiterate and thus unable to read a ballot sheet properly. Many voters said that they had merely told the electoral officer whom they wished to vote for and he then marked their ballot sheets.

The system of patronage and allocation of rewards also tended to increase the prestige of the ruling group as well as to contribute to its enrichment.

The Government controls the largest employment sector in the Transkei. In addition it offers

Blacks the kind of high status jobs that are not available elsewhere.

The disappearance of Chiefs Poto and Dalinyebo from the head of the Democratic Party did this party harm, with a largely tribal electorate.

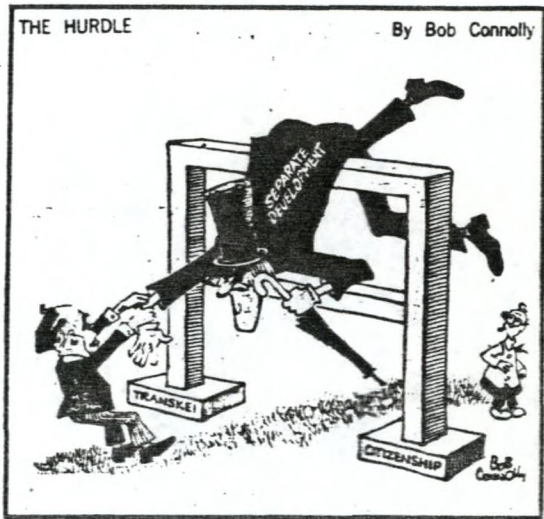
Finally the new leader of the DP, Knowledge Guzana, was at a disadvantage in campaigning against Matanzima. Guzana is a part-time politician and a full-time lawyer, and thus did not have the time and the funds at his disposal to match Matanzima who had the whole weight of government behind him.

Most significantly the 1968 election indicates that even Matanzima did not feel that he could afford to fight as a creature of the Government, even had he wanted to. In fact the TNIP went to great lengths to distance itself from many aspects of separate development policy, especially influx control, and instead put forward a version of apartheid — unarticulated in Pretoria — geared to appeal to a Black nationalist sentiment and designed to overthrow White domination in the Transkei.

Since 1968 Matanzima has increasingly made utterances and demands which conflict with the nationalist vision of separate development. His most recent and unresolved conflict with the central government strikes at the very core of the homeland theory.

He has said that urban Blacks who happen to be Xhosa are not citizens of the Transkei and that there is no room in an independent Transkei for them — they must remain in the urban areas as permanent citizens.

"... We will accept no second-hand position... We are going to get whatever the Black man desires without a single shot being fired in the whole of South Africa."



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Those in between

Extracts from a discussion, led by Dr Manas Buthelezi, at a meeting held in Pietermaritzburg on October 22, 1975, under the auspices of the Natal Midlands Region of the Black Sash. The meeting was a follow-up to a previous Black Sash meeting at which June Chabaku spoke of growing polarisation between Black and White and asked what those of us "in between" (as it were) could do.

DR MANAS BUTHELEZI: I hope you're not going to be disappointed, because I'm not going to give you recipes as to how you should "cook the pot" of your life. Instead I'll say a few words and then leave it to you to solve your own problems.

The way I'll try to work out this introduction to the topic without giving the answer to the question will be to look at the topic "the role of us in between". I've arranged my presentation in the form of three theses.

The first thesis is that those who find themselves in the middle of two groups polarised on moral issues must get out of the middle and take sides. In other words I'm saying to those in the middle "You are in the wrong place". Sometimes being in the middle is the same as being neutral. It's a safe place to be in.

The second point under this thesis is that "in between" may be a position of fear of taking sides where issues are so sharply defined as to leave no room for third parties.

There are only two parties: those this side and those that side. There is no middle.

The third point is that the majority of contentious issues do not have grey areas. Things are black or white. There is no place in the middle.

I will illustrate this. One of the contentious issues is the sharing of power. You either share basic or essential power, or hold it exclusively in your hands and only allow others marginal power or merely the trappings of power. So it's a matter of either or.

The second illustration of this concerns the sharing of wealth. You either share wealth or keep it to yourself, only allowing others crumbs of wealth in the form of charity or survival wages — you pay them enough to keep going but not to improve their standard of living.

Another issue where there is no grey area is the question of the sharing of civil liberties. You either share freedom with others or see the freedom of others as a continual threat to your own freedom . . . and this necessitates the so-called security measures for containing the freedom of others.

My second thesis is that in South African racial politics the word "polarisation" is a misnomer if

it is intended to suggest that Blacks and Whites have bilaterally retreated in order to take up a striking pose of confrontation at each of the political poles. I'm denying that there is polarisation in the dictionary sense of the word.

The thesis is easily explained. Blacks have been pushed by the systematic policy of apartheid to where they are at the moment. One realises that this is so when one thinks of Black consciousness or the apparently more threatening Black power — that is, a political stance of establishing a power base from the initial consciousness of powerlessness.

You become aware of the fact that you've no power, no vote, and so on, and from this consciousness you try to create something out of nothing; and that is what people mean by Black Power. There is really no power.

Instead of speaking of polarisation, one should rather speak of those who have pushed others out, and those who have been pushed out.

There is no position of in-between. In the homelands they have been pushed out; separate development was simply conferred on us. People in Newcastle never chose to reside at Madadeni: they were simply pushed out.

Students never chose to go to ethnic universities where they would see no White students, but see only Black people around them: they were pushed out. You may call this polarisation, but basically it is not polarisation. It's a question of one group pushing others.

My third thesis is that the role of those who believe that a viable society can be built only on the foundations of justice for all is that of striving to give power to the powerless, until reasonable sharing is realised.

So I'm not talking of those in between, but of those who believe that a viable society can be formed and structured only on the foundation of justice. They may belong to the group that has been pushed out, or to the group that has pushed others out — if there has been a conversion. Therefore those who have this feeling should support constructive Black initiative, regardless of whether or not one believes in the presuppositions on which it is based.

I know that many White people feel disturbed about the phenomenon of Black consciousness, of

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