The Transkei

For over 100 years the minority white population of the Republic of South Africa has maintained political and economic control over the black majority. Since 1948 the Afrikaner-controlled Government has elaborated and implemented the system of apartheid, now called "separate development", which has as its goal the division of the country into a single white and ten black independent states, and as its practical end the allocation of only 13% of the country's overall territory to those black states which are to be the homelands for 80% of the area's population. Major ports, industrial centers, mines and other sources of South Africa's wealth are found in the areas to be allocated to the whites. Because of white South Africa's dependence upon black labor, and because of the economic inviability of the "black" areas, at least one-half of the black population would live in the white areas even after "separate development" reached its planned climax of 11 separate political entities.

The Transkei is one of South Africa's black "homelands" (originally known as "native reserves" and later as "Bantustans"), which is due to become "independent" in 1976. The Transkei covers 16,556 square miles in the southeastern part of the Republic, with a 1972 population of 1,734,000, mainly blacks, speaking Xhosa and related languages, and coming from a number of ethnic groups. The Transkeians are predominantly small farmers who live in homesteads which are administered in "locations" by a chief who is answerable to the magistrate of the district. There is no heavy industry in the Transkei and only 40 to 50 light industries. The government employs close to 50% of all salaried workers. Some 350,000 Transkeians are employed as migrant workers in the Republic.¹ Most of the higher-level civil

service posts in the Transkei are held by South African whites, as are the managerial positions in many industries.

Chief Kaiser Matanzima, leader of the governing party in the Transkei, has promised a non-racial society after independence; however, according to advertisements published by the Xhosa Development Corporation, whites will continue to live in special areas\(^2\) and their children will continue to attend all-white schools.\(^3\) Matanzima has indeed stated, "... we deplore forced integration. Although public amenities will be open to all, price selectivity will be operative and no swamping of sophisticated amenities by socially unacceptable elements will take place.\(^4\) The Transkeiian army will be trained by members of the South African army who will also act as advisors and support personnel. In this regard Matanzima has said, "The Transkei Government... renews its pledge to place warriors of the new Transkei in the forefront of the defence of the Transkei and the Republic, to which we owe our renaissance as a people."\(^5\)

These and other realities to be discussed below must be borne in mind in considering the Republic's domestic and foreign policies and its resultant grant of independence to the Transkei as an example of the success of "separate development" and as the solution to South Africa's racial problems.

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Separate Development from an Historical Perspective

For almost as long as Europeans have been in South Africa, their efforts toward total separation of the races have been a fact of life. As early as 1838, when the Boer Republic of Natal was established, it was determined that non-whites had no right to be in the white parts of the Republic except as servants. They were not allowed to own land, could not take part in the political process and needed passes signed by white employers in order to walk about freely in the white areas.

During the 1920's there took place a consolidation of the idea of native reserves as a system whereby blacks could be excluded from the white areas except as they were needed. At the same time it was the practice to overburden the reserve areas in order to force able-bodied blacks into migrant labor. The Transkei, an adminis-
trative unit created in 1894, was a source of migrant labor for the mines during the boom years at the beginning of the twentieth century when South Africa's enormous mineral wealth was being discovered. At that time a "hut tax" was imposed on Africans in the Transkei as a means of forcing them onto the labor market because they would need cash to pay the tax. As of 1972 the "hut tax" was still in force.

Significant South African legislation was promulgated between 1909 and 1927 which set the stage for separate development. The 1909 South Africa Act was the first step toward giving the State President the ability to rule the Transkei by proclamation without regard to Parliament, a process which culminated in the Native Administration Act of 1927. The Natives Land Act of 1913 was the first legislative recognition of overall territorial segregation. This Act set aside certain areas of land already occupied by Africans for their exclusive use, and forbade them to acquire land anywhere else. In 1923 influx control was established, which controlled the movement of Africans into white areas. Thus, the groundwork for the homelands system was set, and in 1948 when the Nationalist Party took over, apartheid became official state policy.

**Political Developments Within The Transkei**

When the Transkeian people came under the rule of the Cape Colony's Native Policy in 1894, the four western districts of that area sent black representatives to a General Council which had

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a reasonable voice in the management of the internal affairs of 
the Transkei. By 1931 22 other districts had been delineated and 
were included in what became the territory's own debating chamber 
and offices, the Bhunga. Each district elected representatives; 
however, the chairman was always a white magistrate, as were 26 of 
the 109 members. The black representatives formed a majority, 
nevertheless, and were by no means puppets.

In 1951 the Bantu Authorities Act took away what powers these 
elected representatives had and gave them to appointed chiefs, many 
of whom were without any traditional legitimacy. The Territorial 
Authority was told by the Secretary for Native Affairs that from then 
on they could tell the people what to do, not just ask. A further 
move away from a democratic system came with the declaration of 
a "state of emergency" in the course of the bloody "pacification" 
in 1960-61 of the revolt of the Pondo and Tembu peoples in the 
eastern Transkei. Under this state of emergency, which is still in 
effect, there are no individual liberties. All power is in the 
hands of the police and the army.

The Transkei Self-Government Act of 1962 provided a Constitution 
which restored the elective principle. The white magistrates were 
eliminated but were "replaced" by many white officials serving as 
"observers" and "advisors" to the Bhunga. The Republic's Nationalist 
Government also appointed 64 chiefs to this 109-member Transkei 
Legislative Assembly, which kept effective control in white hands. 
Thus, in the subsequent election in 1963, the candidates of the 
Democratic Party (predominantly Pondo and Tembu), who won a 3:1

7. Ibid., p. 20.
majority of seats in the Assembly, were actually outnumbered by their
opponents, the Transkei National Independence Party, which took power due
to the support of chiefs appointed to the Assembly. In 1968 the TNIP gained
13 elected seats which gave it a majority of elected members. There were
allegations of "irregularities" in the election; the TNIP actually admitted
to many.\(^8\) Other factors leading to the TNIP victory included the splitting
off of the Freedom Party from the Democratic Party and the loss of a number
of Democratic leaders to retirement, ill-health and jail. In 1973 a third
election produced another majority for the TNIP, although again allegations
of corruption were voiced.

The leader of the TNIP, Kaiser D. Matanzima, is a lawyer and minor
chief who was promoted to Paramount Chief by the Nationalist Government; he
was thus supported for his willingness to work within the apartheid system.
Matanzima has at times been critical of the Republic's policy, but has in
general used it for his own ends. His greatest power derives from the
state of emergency, which he has refused to lift. It empowers him, for
example, to banish his critics and to refuse permission for gatherings of more
than ten persons. Like Matanzima, the appointed chiefs gain money, status and
police protection by cooperating with the South African white regime.

The small parliamentary opposition party, the Democratic Party, is led
by Senator Knowledge Guzana who opposes independence for the Transkei as a
separate country and who has said, "The balkanization of South Africa is in
no one's interest. We are one nation."\(^9\) Recently, several members of the
opposition party have been jailed.

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8. Ibid., p. 21.
Despite the "self-government" constitution which has been in effect since 1962, there are many indications that the Nationalist Government has retained effective control in the Transkei. In addition to the presence of white advisors in the Bhunga and in ministerial offices, other forms of control include the fact that all legislation passed by the Assembly has been subject to the assent of the President of the Republic, the retention by the Republic of power over Transkeian defense, external affairs, internal security, postal service, railroads, immigration, currency and banking, customs and excise regulations. Furthermore, up to 80% of the Transkei's annual budget has come from the Republic, and after independence the budget will continue to be subsidized by the Republic by 60-70% for the indefinite future.

In the light of this political history, one can only question what kind of "independence" and what kind of government the Transkei will have. Its advocates have announced that the Transkei will have a democratic political system, but nothing has been said about when the state of emergency will be terminated. They claim that Chief Matanzima democratically obtained a mandate for his independence policy in the election in 1973. However, in that election, the people were not consulted on the issue of independence and no referendum has since been held. The advocates of independence say that the Transkei already has the power to amend or repeal Acts of the South African Parliament when and as they apply to the Transkei itself. One wonders why Matanzima's government has not dealt with such laws as those reserving skilled jobs to white workers, those
setting grossly unequal wage scales, the despised "pass books", the influx controls, censorship and educational restrictions, and the many other regulations which constitute the structure of apartheid.

Separate Development

The South African Government gives many justifications for separate development. First of all, they maintain that the lands now set aside as the homelands were the traditional tribal homelands of the Africans, and that the land which the whites now occupy was that which was settled by the whites. These positions are, however, not based upon the realities of either history or sociology. Large settlements of Africans were, in fact, located in what are now white-controlled areas and, through extended warfare, Africans lost control of these territories. The "homelands" were in many cases, including the Transkei, actually administrative units established either by the colonial government or by the South African government, and only "loosely related to the actual social groupings which pre-existed colonial times." 10 The name "Transkei" is a European designation for the area across the Kei River from the white settlements.

The whites also maintain a religious justification for separate development, claiming that God intended that ethnic identity be preserved and group identities not be blurred. Indeed, they feel that there is a divine origin for the idea of nations. They also feel that it is their Christian duty to be the guardians over non-

white races which, they maintain, are at a less-developed stage of civilization.

Yet "apartheid" and "separate development" have never in fact equalled total separation of the races. From the earliest days of Nationalist Party rule the Party's intentions have been clear. The Party's first Prime Minister stated in 1948, "... Nor does our policy of apartheid mean ... that we are going to eliminate all the natives who are at present in the European towns and who come here to work, and that we are going to send them all to their own reserves. ... That is a caricature of our policy of apartheid." A decade later, Prime Minister Verwoerd shifted the original theory of apartheid away from "total separation of the races" to the idea of "separate development." A political rather than a geographical concept, this newer image for apartheid specified that the Blacks should be given their own states. Black migrant laborers would be allowed to live and work in the white areas but they would be denied any rights or permanent legal residence there. The homelands were to be developed; however, the Verwoerd government's efforts in this regard were meager at best. These areas served and continue to serve as labor reserves for the white-controlled economy and a location for agricultural workers and those deemed unproductive -- the old, the very young, the sick, those "endorsed out," and the "undesirables." To make them self-sufficient would be to cut off South Africa's labor supply.

In recent years, the South African Government has again come under heavy external criticism of its racial policies by the independent states of Black Africa, the United Nations, and many other governments and private organizations around the world. In response, it has claimed that it has been preparing the blacks for ultimate independence in the separate, ethnically-defined

"homelands" to which they have been or will be assigned (whether they ever have actually lived there or not), and has pointed to recent South African expenditures on the infrastructures needed to attract investments in those homelands. The Nationalist Government would have the world believe that apartheid is working — witness the black government of the Transkei which has accepted the offer of "independence." Both the Nationalist Government and the Transkeian leaders claim that the Transkei will be "as independent as France, for example — free to negotiate the signing of treaties with the Republic and any other country." 12

Homeland and Transkeian Realities

In spite of what the South African Government says, the plain facts of separate development are the following:

1) The homelands, which are intended to accommodate 80% of the South African population, comprise only 13% of the total land area of the Republic while the other 87% is reserved for the exclusive use of the whites who comprise only 20% of the population.

2) The homelands are not contiguous areas. They instead presently comprise 113 separate fragments of land; although the South African Government says it intends to consolidate the homelands into 36 fragments, no timetable has been set. 13 Such consolidations are one of the reasons for the mass removals of people to be discussed below.

3) The homelands are not economically self-sufficient. For the most part, and despite the very recent introduction of a number of


light industries, work in the homelands is still in agriculture or cottage industries and over one-half of the employable men have to migrate to white areas for jobs, thus causing great strain on family structures because their wives and children must be left at home.

4) In general, the homelands do not have mineral resources, and in those areas where there are minerals the blacks do not benefit from their extraction.

5) The heavier industries which will "serve" the homelands are located on their borders in the white areas, therefore forcing the black workers to migrate for jobs. Additionally, all of the secondary industries and shops which develop around the large industries will be located in the white areas. Therefore, the money earned there will be spent there and thus not brought into the homelands.

6) There is very little capital available for development in the homelands which is not controlled by whites. The Bantu Investment Corporation, which is involved in all homelands except the Transkei and the Ciskei, and the Xhosa Development Corporation, which is responsible for the "Xhosa" homelands, control investment in the homelands but have no homeland leadership represented on their boards. Since 1959, only 18% of the capital invested by the Bantu Development Corporation has gone to African-owned businesses.

7) In the Transkei the land was originally thought to be potentially rich and capable of producing enough maize for the entire


Republic, provided sufficient capital could be brought in and farming techniques changed. In actuality, because of the lack of funds and of adequate farming methods, only a meager amount of maize is produced and at least one-half of that needed has to be imported. "The Transkei is not nearly able to produce enough food for its own people." 16

8) It has been officially estimated that 17,000 Transkeians enter the labor force each year. 17 Thus the fact that by October 1974, the Xhosa Development Corporation had created fewer than 16,000 jobs over a 10-year period does not mean a great deal, especially when one notes that almost one-third of these positions must go to the Ciskei Homeland for which the XDC is also responsible. 18 African population growth is expected to continue at over 3% per annum. Therefore the presently large movement of migrant workers from the Transkei into the Republic is bound to continue for many years.

9) Between one-half and two-thirds of all blacks in South Africa live outside the homelands. Most were born in the "white" areas and many have never even visited the homeland to which they are being assigned. The Nationalist Government has attempted via mass removals of unwanted blacks to reduce the "surplus population" in the white areas, "surplus" meaning wives, children, the old, the sick and others who may be considered trouble-makers or who do not otherwise meet the Republic's strict legal requirements for permission to live in the white areas.

The South African Institute of Race Relations estimates that from 1960-70, 1,820,000 persons were removed, and the process has continued into 1976.

On the other hand, the South African Government also recognizes that there will continue to be a very large black population in the white areas because black labor will become increasingly necessary for the maintenance of the white economy. Therefore, "...the basic principle (of Government policy) is (to create) separate political structures for blacks, while furthering their involvement economically, primarily as a controlled cheap labour force, but also as a market. This is brought about through the maintenance of separate reserves (homelands) into which the surplus labour force and their dependents can be transferred." With regard to the Transkei, these policies mean that there will be 1.7 million of its "citizens" who live outside its borders, whose only identification with that homeland will often be government-imposed, who in many cases will continue to live under the constant cloud of potential forceable removal from the white areas, and whose only political involvement is to be in the affairs of a distant geographical entity.

The concrete implementation of this citizenship policy is now underway. In May, 1976, the South African Government announced that all persons living outside the Transkei but designated as Xhosas or Sothos from that homeland must take Transkeian citizenship in order to


continue to work in the white areas.\textsuperscript{22} This will apply even when only one of a person's parents was "Xhosa" or "Sotho." The status of children not yet born to such non-residents of the homelands is still at issue.\textsuperscript{23}

The Rand Daily Mail has objected strongly to this government policy, stating that it "goes beyond political blackmail. It is coercion of the most blatant kind, and is dangerous. For, who can doubt the resentment that must build up in people forced to choose between relinquishing a birthright and making a living?"\textsuperscript{24} And even Chief Matanzima has strongly objected to forced Transkeian citizenship. "Many Xhosa are rightful citizens of South Africa . . . and are the responsibility of the South African Government."\textsuperscript{25} He argues that the proposed Transkeian constitution provides for citizenship for persons in the white areas, but also that such persons must be given a choice between South African and Transkeian citizenship. But in reply, M. C. Botha, Minister of Bantu Affairs, said, "If the Transkei refuses to grant citizenship to people outside the territory, they will become stateless by an act of the Transkei government, not by South Africa."\textsuperscript{26}

The London Economist points out that if the above South African government policy holds, 8 million black persons will be rendered stateless. "White South Africa will then become the only country in the world with more than twice as many foreigners as citizens of its own."\textsuperscript{27} As of July, 1976, this question of citizenship was posing a decided roadblock to the plans of the Nationalist government. Indeed, before Parliament recessed in June,

\textsuperscript{23} Laurence, "A Decision for Unborn Xhosas," \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{24} Quoted in Wright, "South Africa," \textit{op. cit.}
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} "South Africa: The Make-up Wears Thin," \textit{The Economist}, May 8, 1976, p. 61.
1976, it passed a resolution which omitted the specific date of October 26, 1976, from the legislation providing for independence of the Transkei. 28

10) Not only would blacks living outside their respective homelands be denied South African citizenship, they would also be denied the rights extended to other foreigners residing in the Republic. "For to grant any kind of normality to Transkeians entering South Africa would result in the destruction of the entire edifice of racial discrimination which is an integral and inseparable part of separate development. . . From being second-class South African citizens, Africans from the Transkei will merely become second-class Transkeians." 29

11) The removals of surplus populations to the homelands shifts the burden of providing social services for workers and their families to the homeland governments, a burden they are not financially equipped to bear. The result has been overcrowding, widespread malnutrition, and a very high mortality rate among small children. 30 "What one can never do, given all the time in the world . . . is to convey the anguish and horror, the heartbreak, the agony and anger, the bitterness and rage that these removals cause." 31


31. Statement made by a researcher for Black Sash, a white South African women's organization, as quoted in "Uprooting a Nation. . .", op. cit., p. 9.
12) No referendum on the subject of independence has been held in the Transkei. A pre-independence election is planned. However, this is seen by the opposition as no substitute for a referendum. In addition, Hector Nookazi, a leader of the Democratic Party, has pointed out that present laws which allow for detention without trial, and which require the written consent of a Bantu Commissioner before meetings can be held, make it difficult for anti-independence voices to be heard. 32

13) The draft constitution for the Transkei, published on April 23, 1976, does not auger well for either a democratic political system or true independence. For example, Parliament is to be composed of 150 members, 75 chiefs and 75 elected persons. No Bill of Rights is included. Although repressive South African statutes such as the Group Areas Act and the Separate Amenities Act are to be repealed, the Mixed Marriages Act and the Immorality Act are not. And the Terrorism Act and the state of emergency created in the Transkei by Proclamation R400 will remain after October 26. 33

14) As was pointed out above, about 70% of the Transkei's budget is provided by and thus controlled by the South African Government. This will continue after independence. The South African Government similarly controls the budgets of the other homelands.

15) With the exception of the Transkei, language restrictions are placed on the homelands' schools, restrictions which prohibit the use of English or Afrikaans as the language of instruction. The local African language must be used, a fact which is of great concern to many African parents who see that their children are being prepared only for participation in the most provincial of lives. In this respect education for black children has regressed from that given their parents' generation.

Opposition to Transkeian Independence

The projected grant of independence to the Transkei has, as mentioned above, met with great opposition in the United Nations and has generated what David Ottaway terms as being "an unprecedented storm of protest from Black Africa." Ottaway points out that even the proponents of independence admit that its purpose is to prevent the attainment of black majority rule in South Africa as a whole.

Black South African nationalist leaders and many homeland leaders have voiced opposition to independence for individual homelands. For example, the Chief Minister of Gazankulu, Professor Hudson Ntanwisi, has stated that "We should lose our claims to South Africa's wealth and would be abandoning our claims to an economy we have helped to build up." And it has been reported that Robert Sobukwe, the leader of the now-banned Pan African Congress, "has nothing but contempt for those who cooperate with the homelands policy." It is rumored that Nelson Mandela, imprisoned African National Congress leader, refused to trade the position of Prime Minister of the Transkei for his Robin Island cell because he cannot accept homeland independence.

One of the strongest voices against the concept of independence for individual homelands is Chief Gatscha Buthelezi, leader of the KwaZulu homeland. In his March 4, 1976, speech at Soweto, the black township outside Johannesburg, Chief Buthelezi said,

35. Ibid.
37. Thomson, op. cit., p. 16.
I challenge anyone to prove to me that the majority of Blacks do in fact want the so-called independence which is offered to our Reserves now called 'homelands.' The people who have elected me have so far given me no mandate to opt for the so-called Homeland. They are so far unequivocal on this stand. The majority of black people do not want to abandon their birthright. They have toiled for generations to create the wealth of South Africa. They intend to participate in the wealth of the land.

When I speak for my people in this particular matter, I speak also for the majority of blacks in this country. No single Black leader will dare go to his people to decide the independence issue on the basis of a referendum. This in itself speaks volumes.

It seems to me to be a most unfortunate coincidence that as this hour beckons to us, to come and face this greatest challenge (of organization), we have to lose at this very hour some of our brothers and sisters through a balkanization which can only give White domination a breathing space and further prolong our people's suffering. I say these words not in a spirit of castigation. I respect my brothers and sisters in the Transkei and Bophuthatswana, far too much to attempt to do this. This is a lament, because my heart bleeds for who knows what lies in store for them, or for us, in this ideological separation imposed upon us by the White minority power elite through their unilateral parliamentary decisions.

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The Task Force on Southern Africa of the Potomac Association, United Church of Christ, strongly urges non-recognition of the Transkei as an independent state.

Task Force on Southern Africa
Potomac Association
United Church of Christ
August, 1976