

## IN THE WORLD

## SOUTH AFRICA

# Independence for black bantustans a curse, not cure

By our Southern Africa Correspondent

**A**T 5 P.M. IN ANY SOUTH AFRICAN city, you can see a stream of blacks moving towards the train station. From there, they go out to their homes in black townships, often two hours away from the whites-only areas where they work.

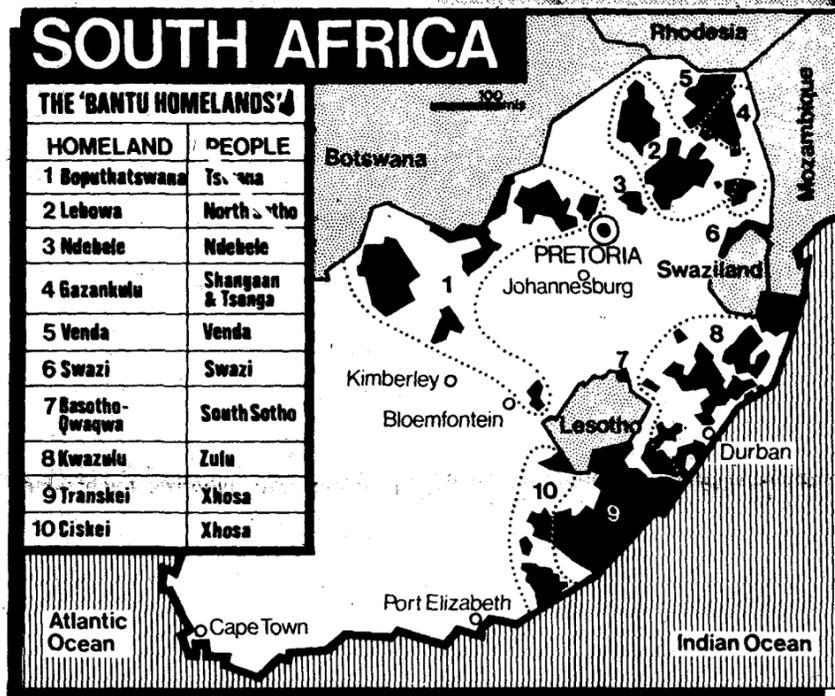
In Pretoria, South Africa's capital, the blacks are not simply going to a township. They are actually leaving South Africa for another country—though they, too, will return in the morning, ready for work at seven. They live in GaRankuwa, part of an independent country called Bophutha-Tswana; if border controls were strictly observed, the GaRankuwa railroad station would have to process 90,000 passports an hour during Pretoria's peak rush hours.

Two years ago, Pretoria's workers were still South Africans. But last December, Bophutha-Tswana's Chief Lucas Mangope took the plunge: his country became the second of South Africa's bantustans to accept independence from the rest of the Republic.

Of course, Bophutha-Tswana has had some difficulty presenting itself as an independent country. To begin with, no one outside of a few Nationalist Party officials knows exactly where its borders are; the country includes six or seven large bits and several black dots, all separated by pieces of South Africa, and no one knows which the bits are. Most of its population had never lived in Bophutha-Tswana; South Africa's white regime assigned them to the bantustan because of their tribal origin.

Bophutha-Tswana is trying hard. It is poor. Most of its gross national income is earned outside its borders, in South Africa's mines, factories and industries, and

The bantustans are dirt-poor reservations that keep South African blacks at the mercy of whites.



in cities like Pretoria: South Africa's Ministry of Foreign Affairs supplies some 70 percent of Chief Mangope's government budget.

But Bophutha-Tswana is doing its best to build up its resources; just last month, Mangope's ministers announced a new development plan, based on tourists from South Africa. The big attraction? Boph-



KwaZulu's chief Gatsha Buthelezi

despite their so-called independence—serve as the keystones of South Africa's system of grand apartheid (pronounced apart-hate). Under the Nationalist Party's policy of separate development for the different races, blacks are assigned to the bantustans—less than 13 percent of the land, for 87 percent of South Africa's people.

Until 1976, the ultimate goal of independence for the bantustans—or homelands, as the government has taken to calling them in the last decade—remained far in the future, when white South Africa deemed its blacks capable of ruling themselves. But since the Soweto disturbances, the government has speeded up the process. Two bantustans are independent, a third is about to be, and the rest are under pressure to accept independence in the near future.

Many South Africans believe the speed-

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## Infogate scandal sinks ruling whites

When James T. Kruger, South Africa's Minister of Justice, was informed last year that Steve Biko had died in detention, he told reporters, "Steve Biko's death leaves me cold."

Percy Qoboza, editor of South Africa's largest black newspaper, had a similar reaction to the scandal that has swept the top ranks of the ruling National Party—a scandal that many white South Africans say makes Watergate look like a parking offense. "Connie Mulder's resignation," Qoboza said, referring to one of the scandal's casualties, "leaves me cold."

In fact, as Qoboza was pointing out, the cabinet reshuffling that has followed revelations that National Party officials were misusing government funds will not have much impact on the position of South Africa's black majority. A black cartoon character in Qoboza's *Post* put it succinctly, the day after a commission of inquiry announced the government had funded a conservative English-language newspaper called *The Citizen*: "What I want to know is, when are they going to make me a citizen?"

Certainly the fall-out from the Information scandal has had serious repercussions in the Nationalist leadership, ending the careers of some of the most hated figures

—notably Mulder, former Minister of Plural Relations (the post-Soweto name for Bantu Affairs) who oversaw all aspects of black life. Many others, including State President J.B. Vorster and Prime Minister P.W. Botha, are implicated in a major cover-up attempt.

The scandal revolves around the Department of Information, which has over the last few years channelled huge sums of government money into various schemes designed to improve South Africa's image at home and abroad. Since most of the department's operations—including a 1974 attempt to buy the *Washington Star*—were carried out covertly, to avoid any appearance of propaganda, there was ample opportunity for the men involved to slip well over \$15 million into their own pockets.

The white press has treated the revelations of corruption and cover-up as being of overwhelming importance, pushing even the threat of economic sanctions over Namibia out of the headlines. When Judge A. Mostert, the one-man commission of inquiry, last month confirmed all the misdoings at which the English press had been hinting for over a year, even the Nationalists' Afrikaans-language newspaper began to criticize their leaders.

utha-Tswana, using aid from South Africa, is about to install an artificial wave-making machine in a large man-made lake, to simulate the beaches that can be found along South Africa's southern coast.

### Dumping ground.

The nine bantustans—for that is what Bophutha-Tswana and Transkei remain,

White rationalizations for minority rule have always stressed the moral purity of South Africa's white rulers; the Afrikaans' Dutch Reformed Church has enormous power in the government, which regulates morality as well as political activity. Temporarily at least, the Information Department scandal has pulled the bottom out of white complacency, as the upper echelons of the Nationalists now look at least as corrupt as those of any other African government.

But the upset will probably prove temporary. Prime Minister Botha has fired Mostert, ending his investigation, and Botha's new commission of inquiry seems likely to produce a complete white-wash.

There appear to be numerous other juicy scandals bubbling just under the National Party's surface, including hints that a South African professor and his wife were brutally murdered before they could reveal that government officials had been smuggling money out of the country.

But already the government has begun to blame the entire episode on the traditionally liberal English press, calling the reporters who followed the story unpatriotic and obstreperous, and threatening the papers with reprisals. Since a crack-



C.P. Mulder

down last year removed the last anti-apartheid organizations, the English press has become the main source of internal criticism, and has become the government's favorite scapegoat for any disturbances.

On the whole, Infogate seems to be only a squabble among South Africa's whites, widening splits within the National Party and between the government and the English press. The only other question is whether or not Mulder's replacement in Plural Relations, Piet Koornhof—who is considered slightly liberal for a Nationalist—will make any significant improvements, and that appears unlikely. It will take more than a little high-level corruption, it seems, to make South African blacks citizens of their own country. ■

—Our Southern Africa correspondent

## South African bantustans

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up is the result of a government decision to push separate development as far as it can, so that the nation's blacks will be fragmented and unable to claim any hold on the country's wealth.

Ever since the Nationalists came into power in 1948, South African blacks have objected to the bantustan policy. None of the bantustans is a viable economic unit; they contain no natural resources, no industry, and little arable land. In 1976, the nine bantustans together had an average annual per capita domestic product of R64: about \$6 a month. If you exclude white residents of the bantustans, the figure dropped to a monthly product worth \$5 per capita. The people who live on the bantustans survive on almost nothing—unless a member of their family has obtained a pass to work in South Africa, and can send wages back to them.

Poor islands in one of the world's richest countries, the bantustans were created as a dumping ground for unwanted laborers, a method of population control and a way of defusing black protest. South Africa's infamous pass laws give it the right to send any black back to the bantustan to which he or she has been assigned; the unemployed, the blacks who are too old or too young to work, and the politically active can be removed from white areas without appeal—sent back to starve, or to serve as a reserve of cheap labor for white South Africa.

### Tribal opportunists.

The men who have accepted independence for their bantustans are fairly unsavory characters, and are widely hated by South African blacks. Because the bantustans are supposed to be organized along tribal lines, the government appointed chiefs, claiming to follow traditional patterns. In fact, the tribal base is ridiculous in itself as the bantustan system, since over a third of South Africa's blacks live in urban areas, and many are about as connected to their tribes as an Italian-American is linked to the village his grandfather came from.

Chief Mangope, like Chief Kaiser Mantanzima in Transkei, is a ruthless opportunist; in both BophuthaTswana and Transkei, the opposition has been disbanded or jailed, and government officials are free to use their positions for personal gain. In both countries, too, about half the legislature is directly appointed by the chief, making a farce of the democratic process in the only parts of South Africa where blacks can vote for their national government.

A similar situation is developing in Venda, which is slated for independence early next year. Just after the pre-independence elections last month, Chief Patrick Mphahlele detained more than 50 members of the opposition, without charges or trials. The opposition had just gained 31 of the 42 seats, 42 other members are government-appointed chiefs, but apparently he felt that margin was too close for comfort.

Pretoria seems to have agreed. The Venda detainees were picked up by South African police, and held in South African cells. And throughout the uproar that followed the jailings, South African government officials continued to describe Mphahlele's move towards independence as "the kind of democratic, peaceful change that should serve as an example for the rest of black Africa."

### Holding out against independence.

One bantustan leader, KwaZulu's Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, has stood firmly against independence, and since 1976, he has begun to suffer for it. He has said repeatedly that he will not sell his people's birthright—he will not let the Zulus cut themselves off from the rest of their country.

Until recently, Pretoria allowed Buthelezi to speak freely, pointing to him as an example of South Africa's free speech.

But for the last two years, it has put increasing pressure on him to accept the kind of independence given Transkei and BophuthaTswana. The subsidy that Pretoria gives Buthelezi, who governs the most populous of the bantustans, is substantially smaller than that given to any other bantustan leader; last year, KwaZulu's entire subsidy was barely three-fourths the amount it needs to run its school system, which is only one of the four departments the subsidy theoretically covers.

Buthelezi has been forced to levy additional taxes on his people; not surprisingly, they are beginning to grumble. There are indications that Buthelezi will be forced to accept independence or be thrown out by his own people—a situation that his more radical critics have predicted since he accepted the bantustan post.

Along with the push to speed up independence has come a redoubled effort by South Africa's regime to remove blacks living illegally in white areas. The well-publicized raids on Crossroads, a squatter township outside Capetown, have been repeated in other townships throughout South Africa, as policemen sweep through whole cities of corrugated iron and cardboard houses, looking for blacks who are not legally employed. Crossroads was remarkable only because its inhabitants organized resistance. (Incidentally, Crossroads also showed up the absurdity of the tribal basis of the bantustans: when Transkei refused to accept those Crossroads residents assigned to live there, the South African government simply reassigned them to Ciskei, the homeland for another, though related, tribe.)

### Ten children die each day.

Dawn "crime swoops," in which the police and army block off a black township and move through it checking passes, have also become commonplace in the last year; since 1976, it has become too dangerous for police to patrol the townships regularly, and the swoops are the only kind of police protection offered urban blacks. But the swoops only catch one kind of criminal, the pass offender. Where once blacks without the proper permit might, with luck, hope to avoid arrest, now they are almost inevitably faced with "endorsement" back to unemployment on the bantustans.

The pass raids and crime swoops seem to have been prompted by a combination of factors. In addition to increased black unrest over issues like the system of bantustan education, black unemployment has reached an all-time high. No official figures exist, but estimates range as high as 16 percent in Johannesburg to 40 percent in the bantustans. As a leader of Black Sash, an organization of liberal whites, said recently, "Black unemployment is being pushed out to the homelands," where the regime need not concern itself with unemployment relief or medical aid, where the only work is subsistence-level agriculture, and where any political unrest will not disturb the structure of apartheid.

Blacks who are sent back to the bantustans may spend years in resettlement camps set up by the South African government, waiting to be sent somewhere else. Conditions in Thornhill, in Ciskei, are probably typical. Last year, the only doctor working for the camp's 10,000 residents revealed that ten children a day were dying of malnutrition and complications. She was transferred. This year, a typhoid epidemic broke out at Thornhill; the medical facilities were enlarged to meet the emergency, and the camp now boasts a six-bed hospital and a full-time nurse.

Everyone from South Africans to the Organization of African Unity to the United Nations has long recognized that the policy of separate development has meant development for South Africa's whites and underdevelopment for its blacks. But as the regime speeds up the independence process, and as more passes are exchanged for passports, more of South Africa's blacks will find themselves in positions similar to that of BophuthaTswana's citizens: migrant workers in a foreign state, aliens who have no claim over their country's wealth or political process, laboring for white South Africa and living in poverty and powerlessness. ■

## CANADA

# Dudley Do-right done did wrong



By Doug Smith

WINNIPEG

**F**EW CANADIAN ORGANIZATIONS are as well known as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Their boy scout hats and scarlet tunics have for years been a Canadian tourist symbol. For the past year, however, Canadians have been treated to a continuous revelation of criminal acts by the plainclothes security service of the force.

It started when a former Mountie, on trial for trying to blow up the home of a supermarket executive, admitted that the police had been involved in the burglary of the offices of *Agence Presse Libre du Quebec*, a leftist community news service. The officers who authorized the break-in were found guilty last summer but retained their positions with the RCMP. The Quebec provincial government set up a commission of inquiry into the activities of the police. In order to avoid embarrassment, the federal Liberal government used the courts to shut down the provincial inquiry and appointed its own inquiry headed by a former Liberal party official.

Despite the committee's composition, last winter saw a virtual flood of stories concerning the clandestine activities of the RCMP. While the police claim they have been combatting terrorism, most of their activities have been made against social democrat and non-violent left groups.

The most surprising of these activities is the burglary of the offices of the separatist *Parti Quebecois* (PQ) in 1973. The Mounties stole computer tapes containing the names of party members and financial information on the party. In 1976 the PQ became the provincial government in Quebec under Rene Levesque. When Levesque was told of the break-in, he said he had always known those "RCMP jerks" had been watching the party.

The RCMP said they were afraid the party had been infiltrated by extremists.

But at the hearings another reason for the break-in emerged. It seems the RCMP wanted to know which members of the federal civil service had separatist sympathies.

When in 1971 separatist theorist Pierre Vallieres urged people to support the PQ and to forego violent tactics, the RCMP sent out a fake communique denouncing Vallieres. The communique, which was supposed to have come from a separatist cell called "*La Minerve*," stressed the idea that "revolution by violence" is the only way to liberate "us from the capitalist hordes." A lawyer for the RCMP recently said he was trying to protect "the public's right not to know" when he prohibited discussion of whether or not senior officials of the RCMP had authorized the communiques.

The New Democratic Party was also the subject of intense scrutiny as well. In

1972 the Mounties infiltrated the government of British Columbia to see if Trotskyists held important positions in David Barrett's government. Federal NDP party leader Ed Broadbent has charged that the party office in Ottawa was broken into in 1972.

The Canadian Labour Congress has charged that the RCMP has infiltrated trade unions and passed information that they have obtained to corporations that the unions are dealing with. The Congress also charged the Mounties with engaging in disruptive tactics during strikes.

The Mounties have also been opening mail for the past 20 years in violation of the post office act. When this became public, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau commented that it did not bother him if the police had been reading his mail. He said if it was illegal for the police to open private mail, there was only one thing to be done—change the law.

This has generally been the government's attitude to the whole affair. At first they said the press break-in was an isolated affair. When it became apparent that this was anything but the case the government attitude has been that there is nothing wrong with what has been happening. Again and again cabinet ministers and senior police officers justify their actions by saying that the law may have been "technically broken" but higher interests were served.

The government justified its mail opening operation by saying that a Japanese Red Army terrorist had been arrested through information obtained in mail openings. It has since been determined that the man was arrested on the strength of information obtained through legal wiretaps, rather than through the mail. (Although the matter of the legality of wiretapping is another touchy issue.)

The Mounties have also conducted over 400 illegal entries or "fishing trips," as they call them, to see if they can get information on groups suspected of being a threat to the national security. They have also bugged student assembly rooms in various Canadian universities. The Mounties have even been accused of bugging the conversations of Warren Allmand, when he was the minister in charge of the force. Many force members felt that Allmand, who was instrumental in abolishing the death penalty in Canada, was a communist.

At first the Mountie affair made daily headlines for months as the opposition parties continually flung new charges and revelations at the Liberals, the most dramatic being the announcement by a Conservative MP that a bugging device had just been found in his office. But the Liberals have managed to play on the sympathies of a public that still holds the RCMP in high regard. The NDP are now soft-peddling the issue for fear of being thought of as "pinkos."

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