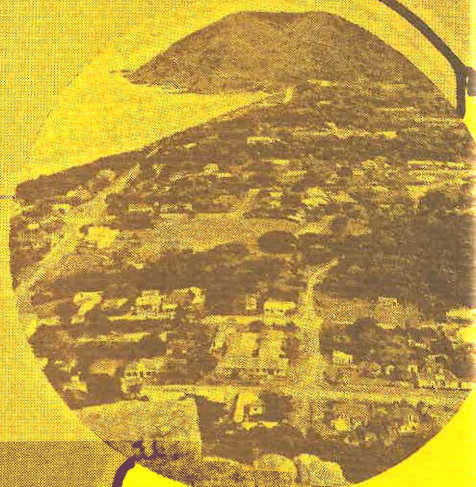


LESOTHO

NATAL - KWAZULU

TRANSKEI



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BROKEN PROMISES & LOST OPPORTUNITIES

**A STUDY OF THE REACTIONS OF WHITE AND COLOURED
RESIDENTS OF PORT ST. JOHNS TO THE CONTROL OF THE AREA
BY A BLACK ADMINISTRATION**

Clive J. Napier and Lawrence Schlemmer

**Maurice Webb Race Relations Unit Centre for Applied Social Sciences
University of Natal, Durban June 1985**



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PREFACE

South African society offers few opportunities for race relations to evolve without the complicating effects of political policies and ideology. Race relations in South Africa are ordered within a framework of structures which more frequently than not prevent an evolution of human interaction from reaching its full potential of goodwill and understanding between groups.

There is a need in our society for situations to be observed and reported on in which different groups can establish relationships without the interference of the structures of social and political differentiation which apply in public life generally. One situation in which this possibility might have existed was the coastal town of Port St Johns after the decentralisation of power to a government in Umtata, made a non-racial community a theoretical possibility.

This modest study is an attempt to study that situation as a case study in race relations and the potential for bridging inter-group differences in our society. The possibilities were not realised in the case of Port St Johns, but hopefully this analysis will point to the reasons for that failure and identify the potential for a more promising outcome in other situations in the future.

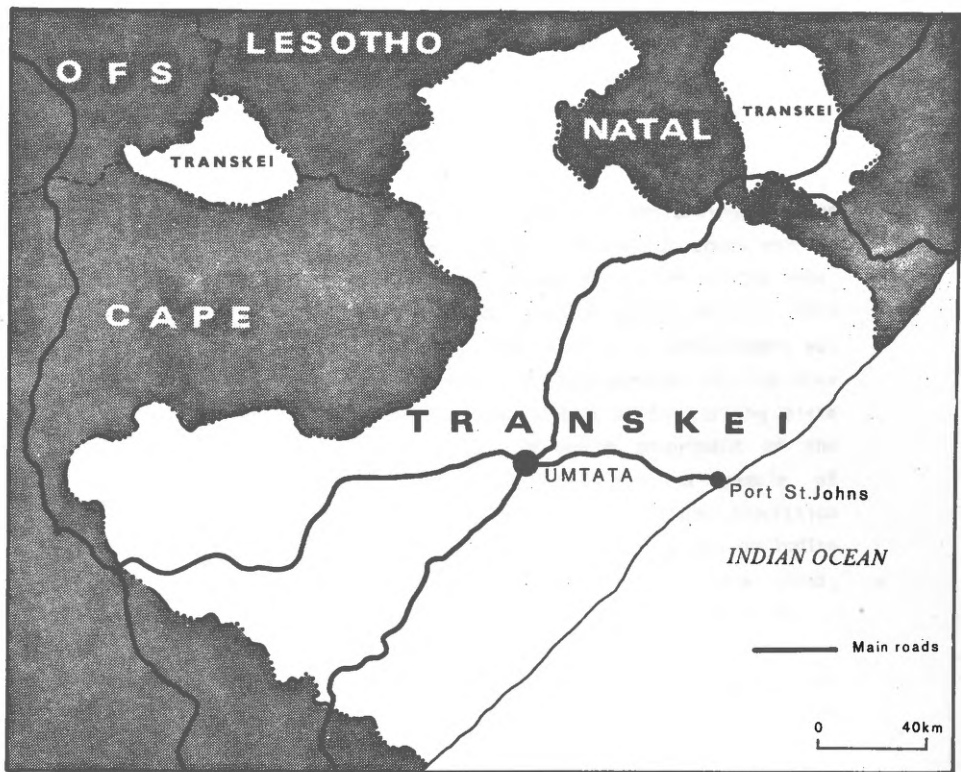
This monograph is based on research which was partly funded by the South African Institute of Race Relations, partly out of a grant for a study of political change in South Africa from the Ford Foundation and partly by the Centre for Applied Social Sciences itself. The authors would like to express gratitude to the South African Institute of Race Relations and the Ford Foundation for the generous assistance.

We would also like to acknowledge the research assistance of Ms Patricia Townsend who conducted the earlier field research in 1974 and who undertook the arduous task of transcribing and classifying the very detailed field notes. The quality of her work is to be commended. Thanks are also due to Mrs Ulla Bulteel and to Mrs Nikki Wells in the Centre for Applied Social Sciences who respectively undertook the computer-processing and typing connected with the study.

We would also like to acknowledge the co-operation of the Transkeian authorities and numerous individuals in completing the project.

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(iv)



CHAPTER 1

THE STUDY AND ITS SETTING : PORT ST JOHNS

The area of Port St Johns at the mouth of the Umzimvubu River on the Indian Ocean in the Republic of Transkei, has three times in the last century seen the racial composition of its governing authority change. At the beginning of settlement in the area, it fell under the control of black tribal administrations, then from 1884 it was under a white administration, and since 1976 it has once again been controlled by a black administration.

The aim of this case study, is to report on and analyse how and why the white and coloured residents of Port St Johns reacted as they did to the most recent change in control of the area, from a white administration to a black administration. This study was commenced in 1974, shortly after an announcement was made proposing that Port St Johns be incorporated into the area of Transkei, which at that time was a self-governing black administration responsible to the white government of the Republic of South Africa. During 1974, a sample of approximately ten percent of the white and coloured population was interviewed in-depth on a wide range of issues, including their reactions to the incorporation issue, their racial views, and their fears about being ruled by a black administration.

In 1981-82, a follow-up study was undertaken, in which all the remaining white and several members of the coloured community were interviewed in-depth on a wide range of issues including their reactions to the incorporation issue, their racial views, and views on the Transkei, approximately five years after Port St Johns had been placed under the control of a black Transkeian government. In the analysis of the survey data, comparisons were drawn, and references were made to residents' attitudes to various key variables, to determine what changes had occurred over this period of time, and the possible determinants of these changes.

The Historical Background

Up until 1844, Port St Johns and its surroundings had been under the control of numerous Mpondo chiefdoms. In 1844, the Governor of the Cape Colony, Sir Peregrine Maitland, under pressure from local Wesleyan missionaries, signed a treaty with Faku a Mpondo chief in the area. This treaty provided for the recognition of Faku as the ruler of the territory between the Mzimkulu and the Mthatha rivers and the Kahlamba (Drakensburg) Mountains and the ocean. Port St Johns fell into this area. The real purpose in creating this treaty state is still a matter of controversy. One of the most widely held views amongst historians is that this treaty state was created to act as a buffer between Natal, the Cape Colony and the Highveld voortrekkers. Thus began a stage of indirect limited control of Port St Johns by a white administration.

During the early 19th century, white-ruled Natal displayed, in the words of Saunders and Derricourt, a spirit of "extraordinarily aggressive expansionism."¹⁾ There was a desire in Natal in the 1840's, to dump so-called "surplus" Africans beyond its southern border, and furthermore "the Boers of the Republic of Natal had a voracious appetite for land."²⁾ Partially occupied fertile land lay temptingly across Natal's southern border. In accordance with Natal's expansionist ambitions and a desire for trade routes, the Colonial Government of Natal acquired free access from Faku to the Mzimvubu River, and complete control, but short of actual possession of the port of Port St Johns. This enabled Natal traders in the mid 1860's to sell significant quantities of hoes, picks, ploughs and wagons and fire arms to the Mpondo which were imported through the port. It also led to the exporting of cattle and timber through the port, and resulted in an estimated fifty to sixty white traders establishing themselves in Pondoland during this time.

These trading activities brought about an increasing concern amongst the colonial authorities as to the extent to which customs duties were being avoided through the use of the port, and also the volume of arms and ammunition reaching the Mpondo. In order to contain these practices, attempts were made by the Cape and Natal governments at various stages, to buy Port St Johns from Faku. He steadfastly refused.

In the 1860's, tensions began to grow between the "great house" and the "right hand house" of Faku's chiefdom. These tensions resulted in a split, and one of Faku's sons, Ndamase, founded a new chiefdom on the west bank of the Umzimvubu River. Faku died in 1867 and was succeeded by another son, Mqikela. These two chiefs assumed the rights of independent rulers and split the Mpondo state. This meant that two leaders had to be dealt with in order to gain control of Port St Johns.

The British High Commissioner tried to persuade Mqikela to sell the area occupied by him at Port St Johns to the Cape Colonial government. Mqikela refused and the High Commissioner then negotiated with Nqiliso who had succeeded his father, Ndamase. In July of 1878, an agreement was concluded between Nqiliso and the colonial authorities, whereby he ceded to the government of the Cape Colony, all the sovereign rights which he possessed over the water and navigation of the Umzimvubu River, and also a narrow strip of land on the western side of the river. In return, Nqiliso was paid £1 000 and recognised as an independent chief.

In response to Mqikela's refusal to part with any of his land, the British High Commissioner sent troops to seize a strip of territory on the eastern bank of the Umzimvubu River. This land was seized by General Thesiger (Lord Chelmsford) in August of 1878, and proclaimed British territory. The Mpondo protested vigorously about the seizure of their territory, and in return for the loss of this territory, Mqikela was given an annual subsidy of £200 as compensation.

The territory occupied by Port St Johns was finally annexed by proclamation to the Cape Colony by the Governor of the Colony, under the provisions of Act No 35 of 1884, on 13th September of that year. This Act was known as the "Walfish Bay and St John's River Territories Annexation Act, 1884". In regard to Port St Johns, this Act simply stated that, "it is expedient that the Port and Tidal Estuary of the St John's River in South Africa, and certain lands on the banks of the said river forming part of Her Majesty's Dominions be also annexed to this Colony". It also made provision for the application of Colonial Acts and the jurisdiction of the courts in the territory.

The remainder of Pondoland was annexed to the Cape Colony in 1894. After annexation, the Cape government divided Mpondo territory into several magisterial districts in which courts were established and taxes levied. This process was accompanied by the diminution of the power of the tribal chiefs, and a white chief magistrate ultimately having responsibility for tribal matters.

Thus by the end of the 19th Century, the Mpondo who were the original inhabitants of the Port St Johns area, had been subordinated to colonial magistrates and white rule. At the time of Union in May 1910, Port St Johns came under the jurisdiction of a powerful white government of the Union of South Africa, and the process of consolidating and ensuring further control over local hierarchies and their interests continued.³⁾

The Legislative Background to Incorporation

The legislative foundations for the incorporation of Port St Johns and the separation of race groups in South Africa, was laid well before the advent of National Party rule in 1948. There are two main pieces of legislation passed prior to 1948 which were subsequently used by the National Party government to implement "independent nation state" policy. When these two pieces of legislation were passed, their intention was to provide for a degree

of territorial segregation in South Africa, but not to provide the basis for "independent nation states".

The first important piece of legislation to be passed was the Natives Land Act No 27 of 1913. This Act defined certain geographic areas which were referred to as "scheduled areas", in which blacks could purchase land, and within which people other than blacks could not purchase land. This Act made provision for the purchase of approximately ten and a half million morgen of land for the creation of what were then known as "native reserves".

The second important piece of legislation to be passed, was the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936. This Act made provision for an additional seven and a quarter million morgen of land known as "released areas" which were to be added to the "native reserves" as provided for in the 1913 Act. The Native Trust and Land Act also provided for the establishment of a "South African Native Trust" which was empowered to purchase this land for native (black) settlement in the "released areas". The Trust could not acquire more than 1 616 000 morgen in the Cape Province, in which Port St Johns was then situated. In terms of this legislation, the area of Port St Johns fell neither in a "scheduled" or "released" area.

As can be seen from the two legislative enactments referred to above, the policy of successive South African governments prior to 1948, was a policy of racial segregation, and more particularly racial segregation at the territorial level. With the assumption of power by the National Party government in 1948, the idea of racial segregation was incorporated into a far reaching and rigid ideology. This ideology provided for a policy of geopolitical separation or "separate development", and the creation of "self-governing homelands" and "independent nation-states" for the various black groups of South Africa. Transkei was the first "independent nation-state" to be created in terms of this policy. The ideology of "separate development" has been described by Schrire as being:

"deceptively simple. The black population of the country is conceptualised as being made up of ten ethnic communities or nations - each entitled to sovereign independence and unassimilable with each other and with the white or brown nations. Each individual black, irrespective of culture, birthplace or residence, remains an immutable component of one of these ethnic nations. The aim of the policy is, in its simplest terms to disentangle South Africa's multiracial society which past economic and social forces have created". 4)

To enable groups to govern themselves in distinct political entities in terms of this policy, the members of those groups have to be brought together into consolidated geographic entities. The town of Port St Johns was affected by this "disentangling process" as dictated by National Party ideology. The issue of the incorporation of Port St Johns into the surrounding predominantly black populated geographic area, was an example of a clash between local white interests and National Party ideology, with the requirements and consequences of that ideology ultimately prevailing.

The first important legislative enactment passed by the National Party government to give substance to its "self-governing homeland" policy, was the Bantu Authorities Act No 68 of 1951. This Act abolished the Native Representative Council, which at that time was the only legitimate structure in South Africa in which all the blacks of the country were represented. This Act also made provision for decentralised institutions of local government, in the form of tribal, regional and territorial authorities (Bantu Authorities) and signalled a return to a form of tribal government which existed in the case of the Mpondo before annexation. The provisions of this act were applied to certain prescribed areas of present day Transkei by Proclamation No 180 of 1956. This Proclamation specifically excluded the district of Port St Johns from the authority of the newly created "Bantu Authorities".

In a South African House of Assembly debate which took place during the passing of this legislation, Dr H F Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs at the time, said that "we should not close our eyes to the inexorable fact that just as little as we desire to have black spots in European (white) areas, as little will white spots be able to remain within native areas. What is just and fair with regard to the European living in the European area, also applies to the native within the area which is his".⁵⁾ It was this line of thought which eventually led to the incorporation of Port St Johns into the Transkei.

A further important legislative provision was the passing of the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act No 46 of 1959. In terms of this Act, indirect black representation in the South African parliament was abolished, and eight national units were created for the major ethnic groups in South Africa. Transkei was one of these envisaged national units. This Act also assigned further powers, functions and duties to the regional and territorial authorities as provided for in the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951.

The next important legislative enactment concerning the Transkei, was the Transkei Constitution Act of 1963. In terms of this Act, the previous Transkeian Territorial Authority was replaced by a Legislative Assembly headed by a Chief Minister with substantive law making powers, and supervisory powers over certain governmental departments. This legislation laid the foundations for the black government which was to govern the Transkei after independence. This legislation in conjunction with other legislation provided for the specific exclusion of the white area of Port St Johns, from the Transkei Legislative Assembly, as far as the exercising of certain defined powers of the Assembly was concerned. This Act was followed by Proclamation R336 of December 1965, and R54 of February 1970, which provided for the reservation of thirty smaller Transkeian towns for the black citizens of the territory, and also extended the Municipal area of Port St Johns to include the white owned farms surrounding the

town. In terms of these Proclamations, no white non-Transkeian citizen could acquire an interest in one of these reserved areas, except by inheritance or donation. Port St Johns was excluded from these provisions.

Links between Port St Johns and the white South African government were further strengthened by the Transkei Constitution Amendment Act of 1968, which excluded further powers over the white area of Port St Johns from the Transkei Legislative Assembly. The powers excluded were the authority over inferior courts, the administration of deceased estates, wills, succession, births, deaths and marriages in respect of citizens of the Transkei domiciled in the white area, and also excluded the jurisdiction of the High Court for the Transkei over the area. This Act also made the South African Group Areas Act of 1966 applicable to the white area of Port St Johns. In 1971, the law was amended to exclude Transkei from the payment of Transkei Territories Road Tax. Further, in 1973 the Transkei Liquor Proclamation was amended to exclude all liquor licences in Port St Johns falling under the jurisdiction of the Transkei authorities.

The tendency therefore, over the years was to progressively exclude Port St Johns, through legislation from the Transkei government, and link it more firmly to the South African government. A sudden turn-around in this trend developed between 1973 and 1976. The reasons and reactions to this turn-around will be analysed below.⁶⁾

Geographic, Demographic and some Social Characteristics

The area of Port St Johns which fell under the jurisdiction of the South African government until 1976, was approximately 9247 hectares in extent and lay at the mouth of the Umzimvubu River. This area was surrounded to the north, west, and south, by territory under the jurisdiction of successive Transkeian governmental authorities as referred to above. This enclave had limited access to the rest of South Africa in that it had had no operational port facilities since about 1942, and had only two poor access roads and a small air field.

An important factor which attracted many of the white people to Port St Johns, was the physical beauty, and peace and calm that prevailed in the area. This factor resulted in Port St Johns becoming a fairly large retirement centre for white pensioners. In 1970, it was estimated that there were 483 white, 183 coloured, and 34,488 black residents in the area. The whites and coloureds fell under the jurisdiction of the South African central government, and the blacks fell largely under the jurisdiction of the Transkeian government.

The occupational breakdown as a percentage of the total population of white breadwinners in 1974 was as follows ⁷⁾:

Pensioners	40%
Businessmen	30%
Farmers	20%
Public and private sector employees (Post Office, Magistrate's Court, Police, Municipality, Bank)	10%

The occupational breakdown as a percentage of the total population of coloured breadwinners in 1974 was as follows ⁸⁾:

Artisans (builders/painters)	42%
Businessmen/farmers	15%
Pensioners	14%
Fishermen	12%
Municipal employees	10%
Unclassified (unemployed)	5%
Teachers	2%

Of the white population, 88 percent were English speaking, and 12 percent Afrikaans speaking. The entire coloured population was English speaking.

Approximately 42 percent of the white population had been born within the boundaries of the Transkei, 45 percent had been born in South Africa, and the remaining 13 percent had been born beyond the borders of South Africa. Of the white residents of Port St Johns in 1974, 24 percent had previously traded in other parts of the Transkei. All members of the coloured population group had been born in the Transkei. ⁹⁾

According to the 1971-1972 Municipal Voter's Roll, Port St Johns had 219 white and 7 coloured property owners. The market value of their properties was estimated in 1974 by the Municipal Council, the Ratepayers' Association, and the Farmers' Association at R15 million. As can be seen from the statistics above, a high proportion of the white population were pensioners, and therefore no less than sixty years of age.

The people who had previously traded in various parts of the Transkei, had sold their properties to the "Bantu Trust" in terms of South African government policy, and had moved to Port St Johns on the basis of assurances given to them which will be referred to below. Most of the people who had retired to Port St Johns, had invested all their savings in their properties with the intention of remaining there permanently.

In 1974, the white political party preferences as a percentage of the population were as follows ¹⁰⁾ :

United Party	40%
National Party	15%
Progressive Party	13%
Democratic Party/Doubtful	24%

The coloured population tended to support the Labour Party, and had a great deal of sympathy for the Progressive Party.

As far as the local economy of Port St Johns was concerned, it was heavily dependent upon tourism and white capital brought in by old and new residents. On average, approximately 12 000 tourists visited Port St Johns annually, with about 6 000 visiting Port St Johns over the Christmas period (11). The Municipality of Port St Johns derived a fair amount of its income from the holiday camps that it operated. Also many of the traders and small scale farmers were heavily dependent upon this annual influx of visitors for their livelihoods.

Most of the white population employed black domestic workers, and this resulted in a certain amount of income for the local population, which in turn helped the white traders. As pointed out above, 42 percent of the coloured breadwinners were artisans, and most of their work was undertaken for the white property owners. This illustrates the key role of whites in the Port St Johns economy at the time. The white property owners and the tourists sustained local businesses, tradesmen and farmers, with the coloured artisan group servicing both the property owners and the businesses. All this generated a need for less-skilled black employment, which in turn provided a market for white shopkeepers. The groups in the Port St Johns economy were highly interdependent.

CHAPTER 2THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF INCORPORATION INTO A BLACK STATEWhite Concerns about the Future Control of Port St Johns

From the mid 1950's, the whites of Port St Johns had expressed concern as to the future control of the area. Behind this concern was a fear of what the consequences of rule by a black government would be for white interests in the area. This fear was aroused by statements of policy made by the National Party government, and Dr Verwoerd in particular, as regards the future of "white spots" in "black areas". An example of this is the policy statement made by Dr Verwoerd during the debate on the passing of the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 as referred to above.

Port St Johns was somewhat different from other "white spots" in that it had a sizeable and concentrated white population relative to other "white spots" in other rural areas of the Transkei. Another factor distinguishing Port St Johns from other "white spots" was that by virtue of its coastal location it was not completely surrounded by "black territory" in order to be defined as a "white spot" in terms of the relevant legislation. Finally, unlike other "white spots", it was believed by some whites that Port St Johns had been bought from the Mpondo.

Because Port St Johns was different from other "white spots", the whites in the area were somewhat reassured that the area would not be incorporated into the Transkei and placed under black government control. Also because of the fairly large vested interests that the whites had in the area, it was perhaps unlikely that the South African government would find it financially or politically feasible to include the area in the Transkei. However, the whites were never completely reassured that the area would not be placed under black government control.

This uncertainty led to the Port St Johns Farmers' Association seeking the first of several written assurances from the South African government and the then Minister of Native Affairs, Dr H F Verwoerd. Communicating through a Magistrate, Dr Verwoerd stated in 1955 that,

"the Port St Johns European area is not a white spot as is generally understood by the term by reason of the fact that it is a European harbour with a European neighbourhood and with free access to other European areas by means of the open sea route, thus excluding the necessity to pass through native reserves. Port St Johns European area must therefore still be regarded as an ordinary European area by reason of its special location. In view of the Minister's decision, I have been directed to assure you that the South African Native Trust is not interested in acquiring any of the land or other sites forming part of Port St Johns' area and that there is no intention to acquire this area by purchase or otherwise for native settlement" (Letter dated 10/11/55.)

A further assurance was received from the Department of Bantu Administration in 1961, by the Port St Johns' Farmers' Association. This letter stated that,

"Your Association is no doubt under the mistaken impression that Port St Johns and the European area adjoining it are what is known as a 'white spot'. This term is, however used to describe land which is entirely surrounded by native areas. Some of the villages in the Transkeian territory and other parts of the country, are such 'white spots', but Port St Johns is not one of them. The Honourable the Minister wishes to remind the Association that both he and his predecessor in office (Dr Verwoerd) have given assurances that the South African Native Trust has no interest in acquiring properties in the area, and the government will not allow any Bantu to purchase any property there." (12)

This statement received extensive press coverage, and is believed to have influenced several whites to settle in the area.

In 1962, the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development again gave his assurance that "neither the town of Port St Johns, nor the European area adjoining it, will at any time fall in the area of jurisdiction of the proposed Transkeian government. The position of Port St Johns and its future is therefore not different to any other town in the Republic which is not entirely surrounded by a Bantu area." 13)

The white residents of Port St Johns were still not satisfied with these assurances, and requested the Minister concerned to introduce legislation to ensure that the area would remain "white". The Minister replied that legislation was not necessary because Port St Johns was a "white" area in terms of existing legislation.

A further assurance was sought and received by the Port St Johns' Farmers' Association in 1970, from the Secretary to the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development. In this letter it was stated that "the policy of the government with regard to Port St Johns, has in the past been stated in the clearest of terms. The Honourable the Minister wishes to re-iterate that the white area of Port St Johns will never form part of the Bantu governmental area of the Transkei." (Letter dated 25/8/1970.) No further assurances were sought by the residents of Port St Johns after receiving this letter.

The Black View

From the early 1970's, the policy of the National Party of creating an "independent homeland" of Transkei began to gather an internal momentum amongst certain blacks of the territory. The black attitude surrounding the "independence" of the Transkei, was articulated mainly by Chief Kaiser Matanzima, Chief Minister of

the Transkei from 1963, and Prime Minister from independence in October of 1976. Many of Chief Matanzima's utterances and actions had a bearing on the reactions of the whites of Port St Johns as they were widely reported in the news media. Because the Transkei was the first "homeland" to be placed on the road to independence, there were no precedents upon which either the blacks or whites involved in the process could base their demands. Many of the negotiations and concessions leading up to "independence", were determined by the negotiating strengths of the parties concerned, and their requirements of legitimacy, prestige and credibility.

One of the first indications of this internal momentum which was ultimately to lead to "independence", was in 1972 when Chief Minister Matanzima visited the Prime Minister of South Africa and the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, and told them that, "he had a mandate from his government to request that to the land already under its control, be added the white owned districts of Elliot, and Maclear in the west, and Mount Currie (Kokstad) in the north in the north-east, white owned portions of the districts of Matatiele and Umzimkulu, also in Griqualand East, and the white enclave of Port St Johns in the south-east. These lands were historically part of the Transkei, he maintained; their transfer would restore the position that existed in 1884."¹⁴⁾

Later in 1972, Matanzima threatened that unless the disputed land referred to above was ceded to the Transkei, the Transkeian government "would oppose the repatriation from the white areas of landless people who had for long periods, been living in cities or on the farms of whites."¹⁵⁾ This move would have frustrated the South African government's attempts at "disentangling South Africa's multiracial society."

In March of 1975, Chief Minister Matanzima moved in the Transkei Legislative Assembly that the Republican government be asked to grant full independence to the Transkei within a period of five years. Matanzima did however place a condition on this in that during this period, the remainder of the land due in terms of the 1936 Land Act, should be added to the Transkei, but that such grants of land should not prejudice the claims of the Transkeian government to the districts requested in 1972, as mentioned above.¹⁶⁾

In response to this request for further land by the Transkeian government, and the desire of the South African government for the Transkei to become "independent", The Bantu Laws Amendment Act of 1976 was passed which provided for the transfer of all outstanding quota land (as determined by the 1936 legislation) to a territory after it became independent.

As can be seen from the above, Matanzima made the acceptance of "independence" conditional upon the handing over of certain white owned land and the fulfillment of the 1936 Land Act. Port St Johns therefore became a bargaining chip in the Transkei independence negotiations. If the Transkei had not accepted "independence", it would have been a tremendous set back to the prestige, credibility and legitimacy of the National Party race policy.

Besides the land issue, Matanzima was the main articulator of the black attitude towards the presence of whites and coloureds in the Transkei. This is a further important factor which had a bearing on white reactions in Port St Johns.

In 1963 the Transkei Constitution Act was passed which provided for, amongst other provisions, Transkeian citizenship, which generally meant that black Xhosa-speaking persons became citizens of the territory. The creation of Transkeian citizenship raised the question of the position of whites and coloureds in the territory after independence. In the early years of Matanzima's Chief Ministership, his speeches "abound with determination to make the territory exclusively African." ¹⁷⁾ In 1965 Matanzima told a by-election campaign that "as soon as you allow them (whites) to stay and build businesses then they will import their sisters, cousins and brothers from overseas. The next thing they will demand is the vote - which they will get over my dead body - and in no time you will find them claiming the Transkei as theirs." ¹⁸⁾

Later Matanzima's attitude began to soften as regards the presence of whites in the Transkei. In February of 1974, Matanzima linked the issue of citizenship to the land issue and stated that,

"Whites living within the existing boundaries of the Transkei, would not be eligible for citizenship of that territory. If however, the additional districts claimed - Elliot, Maclear and East Griqualand - were placed under the jurisdiction of his government, the white farmers and others there could remain and become Transkeian citizens if they wished." 19)

In response to statements of this nature, the South African Minister of Bantu Administration and Development in 1974 said that, "it was not government policy that whites who owned land that was incorporated in a homeland, should continue to exercise these land tenure rights, or should become citizens of the homeland concerned." 20) He also said that,

"if whites whose properties were to be included in enlarged Bantu homelands, accepted citizenship of these homelands in order to retain ownership of these properties, they would lose their citizenship of the Republic of South Africa. In such cases the Republican government would not accept final responsibility for buying them out, 'should things at a later stage get too hot for them'." 21)

This view was similarly repeated to the Transkei White Citizens' Association by the same Minister later in the year.

Also in 1974, the Chief Minister of Transkei,

"called on whites in the territory 'to hasten slowly in the process of withdrawal'. The whole constitutional development of the Transkei was to be orderly and a gradual process, he said. The safety and interests of whites would be well guarded after independence, as would those of Transkeian citizens." 22)

In August of 1975, Chief Minister Matanzima spelt out more clearly his view regarding whites and coloureds in the territory, after independence. He said that the territory "would be non-racial, all petty apartheid restrictions would be abolished. Whites who cared to revoke their South African citizenship and become citizens of the Transkei, would have full

rights to participate in politics and own land." 23) In July of 1976, Matanzima stated that in an independent Transkei, "there would be full equality in every sphere of human activity for blacks and whites. There would be no discrimination in hotels, land ownership or other amenities." 24)

By October of 1976, however, it became apparent that only Transkeian citizens could own property. In this regard, Matanzima said that "whites should sell their land to us and rent it from us." 25) He continued that "if the South African government would say that black people could acquire property in South Africa, there would be no reason why people in the Republic should not acquire property in Transkei." 26)

The key characteristics of the Transkeian government's policy as regards whites and coloureds was a policy of African exclusivism in the 1960's, and in the 1970's became a policy of non-racialism, but with the important limitation that this policy would only apply to whites and coloureds who became or were Transkeian citizens.

All of the above statements were widely quoted in the press, and therefore had a great bearing on the behaviour of whites and coloureds in Port St Johns. Statements of this nature created a great deal of uncertainty as the Transkei was the first of the homelands to obtain independence, and there was no way of knowing how the leadership would behave towards the whites and coloureds after independence.

The Announcement of Incorporation and the Reaction

On 11th December, 1973, it was unexpectedly announced over the radio and in various newspapers, that Mr M C Botha, Minister of Bantu Administration and Development had stated that his Department had proposed that the 9247 hectares on which Port St Johns was situated be incorporated into the Transkei. The implications of this would be that at some future date, the white and coloured residents of Port St Johns, would fall under the control and be

subject to the laws of a black administration. This announcement had far reaching implications for the whites and coloureds of Port St Johns, and it elicited a variety of reactions, both in the immediate and in the long term.

As described above, the residents of Port St Johns had received a series of solemn and firm assurances over a period of time, from the highest levels of the South African government, that the area would "never" fall under the control of a black authority. The Daily Dispatch therefore reported on the day of the announcement that, "horror, dismay and disbelief greeted the news last night that Port St Johns, Alice and Indwe might go black."²⁷⁾ The Mayor of Port St Johns was reported as saying two days after the announcement that, "it would be better if a government delegation headed by the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development visited the resort to see for themselves what we've done for the town."²⁸⁾ He was referring to what the whites had done for the town, and he was also referring to the announcement that the Bantu Affairs Commission would hear evidence from interested people as regards the proposal. The Mayor was suggesting that a delegation of a higher level should be visiting the town.

A Coloured leader who had lived in Port St Johns for all his life, reacted to the announcement by saying, "I like it here, I want to remain here for the rest of my life."²⁹⁾ The local United Party Member of Parliament, Mr T G Hughes, responded by saying that "the South African government has broken another solemn promise."³⁰⁾ Mr C W Eglin, Leader of the Progressive Party believed that the proposal was "both sensible and realistic, and it removed an important source of irritation between the Transkeian government and that of Mr Vorster."³¹⁾

In general terms, the residents of Port St Johns felt betrayed by the South African government, which as described above, had been prepared to give the residents of Port St Johns written assurances that the area would "never" fall under black control.

The South African government had been prepared to give this assurance on several occasions despite the geopolitical absurdity of Port St Johns when looking at it in terms of National Party ideology.

Within a few days of the announcement of incorporation, the white residents of Port St Johns had established a seven man Action Committee comprising representatives of the Town Council, the Ratepayers' Association, and the Farmers' Association, under the chairmanship of the Mayor of the town. The objective of this Committee was to oppose the incorporation of the town into the transkei, and the strategy of the Action Committee, was to demonstrate to the South African government the strength of white opposition to the proposal. Part of the strategy of the Committee was to gauge the opinions of the ratepayers and tourists in regard to the incorporation issue, by means of a plebiscite and a straw poll. The results of the plebiscite and straw poll were to be presented to the Bantu Affairs Commission, which was to sit in Port St Johns on the 21st January, 1974 to hear evidence. This Commission had been established by the South African government to investigate the question of land and its consolidation in pursuance of National Party ideology. It was composed of political party representatives from the South African parliament with a majority being from the governing National Party.

Before the sitting of the Commission, a plebiscite was held amongst ratepayers. Ballot papers were sent to all ratepayers with the question, "Do you wish Port St Johns to remain as it is at present? (Please only state yes or no)". A straw poll was held amongst the tourists in Port St Johns at the time, where a petition form was circulated to all available tourists and replies were obtained from those who wished to respond to it. The same question was asked as in the plebiscite. The Action Committee sent out 432 ballot papers to occupiers and owners of property in Port St Johns. Almost 60 percent of the property occupiers and owners responded, and of those who responded, 95 percent supported the view that Port St Johns should remain

under the control of the South African government. There were 12 ratepayers who favoured change in the control of Port St Johns. The relatively low poll of 60 percent was believed to be due to the fact that many ratepayers were out of Port St Johns during the Christmas period. The tourist opinion that was canvassed by straw poll (Port St Johns is a popular tourist resort and heavily dependent upon them for income) was almost unanimous in the view that Port St Johns should remain under the control of the South African government.

Shortly before the announcement of the results of the plebiscite and straw poll, several hundred Port St Johns residents attended a public meeting during which the Mayor of the town and Chairman of the Action Committee,

"advocated a defiant front to the Department of Bantu Administration's proposal that the 9247 hectare district be handed over to the Transkei. They applauded his call that the town's newly appointed Action Committee tell the Bantu Affairs Commission, bluntly that they do not wish to become part of the Black homeland. 'If we fight with all our might, we will win the day'; the Mayor said confidently to enthusiastic applause."³²)

After the meeting had taken place and the results of the plebiscite and straw poll had been announced, the Action Committee drew up a memorandum which was submitted to the Bantu Affairs Commission and all members of the South African Parliament. The memorandum detailed the reasons why Port St Johns should not be incorporated into the Transkei. It began by giving a brief outline of the area, the earlier assurances given by the South African government, and gave the results of the plebiscite and straw poll. The memorandum also made mention of property ownership, and used this issue to explain why there might be dissent amongst whites on the issue of incorporation. In this regard, the memorandum stated that,

"The price of land and properties has increased considerably over the years, and anybody wishing to sell his property and leave Port St Johns, would have had no difficulty in obtaining a realistic price for his property. However, it would now appear that there are a few persons in Port St Johns who have, possibly, not made a success of their businesses or their farms, or may wish to leave Port St Johns for certain other reasons, and feel that if they were to press for Port St Johns to be transferred to the Transkei government, that they would receive substantial compensation for the government. They most probably feel that they would receive a better price from the government than from a private buyer."³³⁾

The memorandum also looked at the question of defence, and radio and air communications, and the role that Port St Johns could play in this regard. As regards defence, the memorandum stated that,

"It is submitted that the government must realise the advantages of having retained Walfish Bay, for defence purposes, and likewise, it is respectfully submitted that it is in the interests of the Republic that Port St Johns should also be retained as it will prove to be most invaluable for defence purposes in the future."³⁴⁾

Under sundry information, the memorandum said that,

"The relationship between the whites and the Bantu in the area, which has existed for many, many years has always been very good. The Bantu look upon the whites as a source of income... the whites also create stability in the area, and it is doubted whether the local Bantu would want the whites to leave Port St Johns."³⁵⁾

When the Bantu Affairs Commission sat, almost the entire adult population attended the hearing. The Majority of the white population still appeared to be in favour of Port St Johns remaining outside the control of the Transkeian government, however, thirteen property owners (probably including the twelve who had voted no in

the plebiscite) predicted, "that if Port St Johns remained white, it would be a source of continual friction between the Transkei government and the South African government."³⁶⁾ The Coloured community which also attended the hearings, was divided on the issue and presented two opposing views. A Coloured person representing one view, "called for the area to be declared Black because Coloureds in the town had never been recognised as human beings, and had in fact been pushed to the outskirts."³⁷⁾ Another member of the Coloured group on the opposing side said that "the Coloured community preferred to live in an area under white control."³⁸⁾

These were the public reactions to the proposed incorporation. The town had been thrown into a ferment of uncertainty. Everyone wanted a final decision as soon as possible.

CHAPTER 3THE STUDY OF WHITE ATTITUDES IN 1974

As noted above, the 1974 study was based on wide-ranging and detailed in-depth interviews. A representative sample of forty Port St Johns residents were selected at random from address lists on the numerical voters' roll. It can be assumed that the forty carefully selected respondents broadly represented the universe of whites in the town at the time.

The residents were encouraged to converse freely in response to a series of open-ended questions, and express their views, prejudices, hopes and fears. Under these circumstances, it is not normally very easy to crystallise or isolate definite patterns from the welter of sentiments and views expressed among the sample of residents of Port St Johns.

An attempt has nevertheless been made to isolate and describe the more important attitude patterns prevailing in Port St Johns in early 1974. The lengthy verbatim transcripts of the interviews were subject to careful classification and coding, and eventually processed by computer. The results of this process are given in percentages which, obviously can only represent broad approximations of the real position.

Dominant Orientations of the White Group

The following appear to have been the keynote features of the consciousness of the community:

- nearly 90 percent feared or anticipated some racialism or anti-white discrimination by blacks after incorporation;
- about 65 percent feared anti-white hostility, and over 40 percent feared physical threats to whites;
- ✓ - about 65 percent were uneasy about the loss of administrative control by whites, and some 45 percent feared the consequence of black control over the police;
- some 58 percent were uneasy about the breaking of the connection between the South African government and Port St Johns;
- nearly 55 percent to some degree or another, exhibited anti-black hostility;
- an equal proportion, 55 percent, were emotionally opposed to complete racial integration;
- over 50 percent anticipated insecurity of tenure for whites after incorporation;
- slightly over 40 percent believed that the situation would become unpredictable under black control;
- over 50 percent anticipated general or various threats to their material interests, mainly taking the form of anxiety over property values, property ownership, pensions and occupational opportunity;
- slightly more than 50 percent were convinced that blacks had not effectively absorbed "western" norms, standards and values.

About 58 percent of the respondents tended to fear black Transkeians in general, and about 43 percent tended to fear black government officials. Fairly small minorities had positive views of black control, administration, and social integration between blacks and whites, the proportion holding such views never rising above one-third of the community.

These general attitudes presented above suggest a rather unrelieved negativism about change to the racial status quo which had prevailed in Port St Johns until the announcement proposing incorporation. This pattern however, was not one of formless prejudice. Some underlying structure appears to be present in the views as evidenced by a Factor Analysis ³⁹⁾ conducted on the type of variables outlined above, and very cautiously interpreted. It should be remembered that the findings above and below are a picture of prevailing attitudes at a specific period in the evolution of the incorporation issue, and as time went by, different attitudes in response to different variables began to manifest themselves.

The Factor Analysis revealed the following basic factors or attitudinal "sets" underlying the sentiments, presented in order of their importance in contributing to the overall variation in views in the sample:

1. White dominance or "colonial" orientation: this factor involves a very structured perception of Africans as a subservient category, and of whites as those who should properly control affairs. This factor is not associated with an inclination to leave Port St Johns after incorporation.
2. Alienation from black Transkeians: little identification with the Transkei or its people, no sympathy for blacks. Major identification with South Africa and fears of isolation from it. Strong elements of racial prejudice. This factor is completely unrelated to material or property concerns, and is very strongly associated with the desire to leave Port St Johns.
3. Anxiety: this factor is comprised mainly of anxieties concerning disruption of everyday life, physical safety, tenure, and possessions, savings and pensions. The position is mildly associated with the inclination to leave.

4. Materialism: this clustering is mainly concentrated on fears of loss of profits and material privileges. It is not associated with the inclination to leave.
5. Displacement fears: this pattern of concern boils down to the anticipation of being displaced in terms of space, life-style, occupation and residence. It is mildly associated with the decision to leave.
6. Uncertain liberalism: this interesting factor involves a clear commitment to multi-racial living, but simultaneously comprises marked fears of absolutism in black nationalism and of the possibility of black racialism. This factor illustrates a minority view which is equally alienated from white and black ethnic enthusiasms.

Factors Associated with the Inclination to Leave or Remain

This Factor Analysis is significant in that it points to the fact that it was not necessarily those whites with the crudest sentiments of white dominance, or with the sharpest concerns about material privilege, who were inclined to leave the town of Port St Johns. Cross-tabulation of categories of answers from the interviews bear this out as well.

The most important factors which are statistically significant⁴⁰⁾ in their association with the inclination to leave, appear as follows:

- fear of isolation from South Africa;
- fear of discrimination against whites in everyday life;
- fear of the consequences on living patterns of social integration;
- belief that blacks are insufficiently westernised or incapable of becoming "westernised";
- fear of popular black demands creating insecurity for whites;

- anxieties over the loss of administrative control of the situation by whites;
- fears regarding the loss of savings, pensions and properties.

Thus, on the negative side the dominant factors appear to be a blend of generalised white prejudice towards blacks, uncertainty over the future, and isolation from South Africa as a source of security, and fears of threats to the quality of everyday life and security. On the positive side, the factors most likely to have inclined the residents to remain committed to Port St Johns, were sympathy for blacks, identification with their circumstances, unprejudiced views, and an identification with the Transkei or Port St Johns as their "home". These patterns, if both the positive and negative factors are considered, bear out the broad trends in the Factor Analysis.

Some Typical Expressions of View, in 1974

It would seem then, that certain general attitude patterns could be detected amongst the community in Port St Johns in 1974. The verbatim sentiments expressed by individuals provide illustrations of some of the prevailing attitude patterns at the time. Individual views were selected at random from the transcripts and are given below. The occupations of the individuals quoted are also given, since they frequently are associated with the views expressed.

Two of the questions asked in the 1974 survey were, what individuals feared most about the future, and what they thought about blacks and separate development?

In reply to the question, "*what do you fear most about the future?*", an eighty year old property owner who had retired, said that "*it is very difficult for elderly people to uproot themselves.*"

His biggest fear was that, *"should I wish to sell my property some time in the future, would I be able to obtain compensation for my property that would enable me to buy property of the same standard elsewhere?"* As regards the issue of separate development, incorporation and race, *"I see the logic in the Transkei wishing to take over Port St Johns,"* but he believed that if the blacks took over, *"it would be a shambles at first."* He regarded *"the natives as my friends."* Harsh racial views were fairly typical of many pensioners who had a great financial stake in Port St Johns. Some of these responses were *"the blacks get to the top by bribery and everything that is evil, things always worsen when blacks take over,"* and *"the blacks are learning slowly, but it will take three hundred years for them to catch up with the whites."*

A thirty-three year old owner of a general dealer store responded in a different way to the same questions posed above. Unlike many pensioners, he was not unduly worried about his property, and this was most likely because of his belief that *"owners of trading stations that have been bought out in other parts of the Transkei have been treated most fairly."* One of his greatest fears was that if Port St Johns was incorporated, his South African citizenship would be taken away. He also feared that a black take-over of the police force would mean that the upper parts of the hierarchy would be dominated by a conservative compliant group, and the lower levels would be manned by younger blacks *"who have been to the cities, and have built up a resentment about how they have been treated by whites."* This would result in retributive justice being meted out by a black police force. He did not oppose any form of integration and believed that it was *"inevitable in South Africa anyway."* As regards the future, and the question of remaining after incorporation, he said that he was *"prepared to give it a go... but if compensation enables me to establish elsewhere, and the future is too uncertain, I cannot stay."*

In 1982 when the same respondent was interviewed in a similar in-depth interview, he felt that *"life had changed dramatically in Port St Johns. The high up people are getting rich, the ordinary people are not benefitting. Independence has not come up to expectations. Faction fights are still rife. Burglaries have increased. The whites who have remained are experiencing problems with the communications systems, there is no continuity with anything. In the streets there is nevertheless a good relationship between whites and blacks."* This respondent was very disappointed that *"things had not worked out"* and was selling his business to the Black Trust for an undisclosed sum of money. He was one of three white traders still in Port St Johns in 1982.

A sixty-five year old farmer who subsequently left Port St Johns, believed that the creation of "homelands" was inevitable. His main fear was that *"the longer the whites remain in Port St Johns, the more difficult it will be for them to re-establish elsewhere."* He felt that residents should not protest too much against incorporation, as this may prolong the time when the government gets round to paying compensation for their properties. This respondent was going to leave Port St Johns, and feared that *"after a black take-over, bribery would be prevalent because it would be the first time that they (blacks) will have had power, but will manage once they have had more experience."* He, moreover, felt that *"there was a definite anti-white feeling amongst the modern generation. You cannot blame them, some whites treat them roughly."*

A seventy-three year old farmer who had lived in Port St Johns since 1912, and still farmed there in 1982, feared that if Port St Johns was incorporated, *"everyone will go, and we will lose all our friends."* He moreover believed that he would be forced out by blacks stealing his possessions. He nevertheless did not wish to leave and had not considered the matter of property compensation.

In 1982 this respondent still owned six properties in Port St Johns. The Transkei government was in the process of buying five of the properties and the respondent also felt that at the age of eighty-one he was getting too old to farm. He still did not wish to leave Port St Johns, but was nevertheless critical of independence as a solution to race problems. He was also critical of the black police force and their inability to stop thieving. Despite these criticisms, this respondent still wished to stay on in Port St Johns and own property. He applied for citizenship but his application had been turned down.

The level of education amongst the coloured population tended to be very low and furthermore, there was not a great degree of understanding of the issues involved amongst this group. According to one coloured property owner, the area should be incorporated, and he believed that this was the feeling of the majority of the coloureds in the town. He had no fear of incorporation and felt that *"although we have never had a taste of the other government, (Transkei) surely it will not be worse than the present government."* He feared neither a black nor a white government, as *"the coloured people are not a nation. We are part and parcel of the whites, and part and parcel of the blacks. So we can claim from either group."* He had no intention of leaving the Transkei.

Another respondent was a thirty-seven year old civil servant, who said that the announcement of incorporation did not affect him, *"as he could always apply for a transfer."* This civil servant was a National Party supporter, and true to the beliefs of his Party, felt that the area should *"go black, or be incorporated."* He had no fear of the future, and believed that *"people would be compensated according to property values in Pretoria."* He was not altogether fearless of the future, and felt that *"it would not be good living under a homeland government. Lower educational standards would prevail, and only the children of the privileged blacks would be educated."* This civil servant was later replaced by a black Transkeian.

Finally, a bank manager believed that people's greatest fear was whether they would be compensated for their properties, and how much compensation they would receive, and when? This respondent said that he would like to stay in Port St Johns. *"I like Port St Johns very much. The future seems a bit bleak in some ways. I think that the white police should stay for a couple of years. I would feel safer. Black police are not very efficient, but they will be in time."* He felt that dual citizenship may be a good idea as it would *"encourage those who are not afraid of integration to stay, because they will no longer feel abandoned by the South African government, and at the same time would feel accepted by the Transkei government and more welcome."* He also felt that for *"the first couple of years, it would be most uncomfortable living under the Transkeian government."* Like the civil servant mentioned above, the bank manager did not own property in Port St Johns, and being attached to a large banking group, could request a transfer to another part of South Africa.

As far as expectations of the future were concerned the responses of individuals once again reflect the influence of their occupations. The longer pensioners had lived in Port St Johns, the less inclined they were to leave. The most immediate reaction of nearly all pensioners was, *"what about my property, will I be compensated adequately to be able to buy the equivalent property elsewhere?"* Pensioners also were concerned about a black police force, and the ability of the police force to protect white interests.

As far as the businessmen were concerned, their attitude towards incorporation was largely determined by future business prospects. The building trade came to a halt after the announcement, and those businessmen who relied heavily on this trade were more inclined to support the idea of incorporation and sell their businesses. The number of tourists visiting Port St Johns seemed to decline somewhat after the announcement and in subsequent years, and this did to some extent affect businesses which relied on this trade, but not to the extent of the building industry and its effect on other businesses.

General dealer businessmen were less inclined to leave Port St Johns. Businessmen were also concerned about their security under the black police force, but tended to be less racially prejudiced than the pensioners.

Businessmen were generally more philosophical in their approach to Transkeian independence, and one businessman felt that *"blacks can manage the Transkei in time if they have training."* When looking at the race issue in terms of greater South Africa, this respondent felt that *"we are going to have integration if we are not going to have bloodshed, because whites are in the minority. It is no credit being born white, but a matter of pure chance. We cannot say we are superior, but have had better advantages."*

Similar to the pensioners, the farmers who had been in Port St Johns the longest, were least inclined to want to leave. However, the majority of the farmers felt that the sooner they left, the easier it would be for them to re-establish elsewhere. This attitude is probably because farming tends to be a more long term enterprise. The farmers tended to be more racially prejudiced than the businessmen.

Finally public and private sector employees also tended to take a fairly philosophical view of the issue of incorporation. They had steady incomes, and their organisations were obviously frequently linked to organisations in other parts of South Africa. They could therefore reasonably easily seek employment or transfers to other parts of South Africa. There tended to be a fairly general mix of racial attitudes within this group.

The coloured group was divided on the issue of incorporation and as pointed out above, few of them owned property.

CHAPTER 4THE DECISION AND INCORPORATION

Beginning on the 18th February, 1974, the issue of incorporation was taken up in the South African Parliament by Mr T G Hughes, United Party Member of Parliament for Griqualand East, the constituency into which the Transkei fell. A few weeks earlier a South African parliamentary election had been called and the issue of incorporation was used by that party. Forty percent of the whites of Port St Johns were definite United Party supporters. The United Party did not support the incorporation of Port St Johns into the Transkei.

Mr Hughes began his first speech to Parliament on the issue by referring to the recommendation made by the Department of Bantu Administration and Development in regard to Port St Johns, and also to the demands made by the Chief Minister of the Transkei as briefly referred to above. These events he contended, had led to a certain amount of disquiet in the Port St Johns area, particularly amongst the property owners. Mr Hughes then sketched the written assurances given to the residents of Port St Johns as referred to above, and concluded his speech by saying that,

"Now with the suggestion that the independence of the Transkei is imminent, one can appreciate how worried these people in the Transkei are. I appeal to the Prime Minister now, in this debate, to give us an assurance that they will be looked after, and if he can, to give us other details of what will be negotiated with the Chief Minister when independence is granted..... some publicity should be given to the Prime Minister's intention so that the people in the Transkei can know what is going to happen. After all this is a new development, and at the present moment they are most upset and feel very insecure."⁴¹⁾

The South African government's response to this situation was also of crucial importance to how whites and coloureds reacted to the prospect of black rule in Port St Johns.

In reply to Mr Hughes' speech, Mr M C Botha, Minister of Bantu Administration and Development at the time, said that "there is only one attitude with which these matters concerning the acquisition of land can be approached, and that is an attitude of honesty and sincerity..... We must be honest and we must be sincere, and not only to the one side, we must be honest and sincere to the Bantu peoples involved..... in this case the peoples of the Transkei - and we must be honest and sincere to the whites who are involved in this."⁴²⁾ In referring to the written promises as quoted above, the Minister said that, "we did not make promises in the ordinary sense of the word. The word 'promise' is of course a propagandistic and emotionally-laden word."⁴³⁾ He continued that the government could be accused of recklessness if they did not consider Port St Johns together with the provision of more land for blacks and the constitutional development of the Transkei. The Minister also said, and this was crucial to the future of whites in Port St Johns that, "the government will accept full responsibility of buying out the whites who own land and other possessions there, properly on a valuation basis, and to compensate them for the properties they own."⁴⁴⁾ The buying out of these properties was to be done in terms of a white paper issued in 1964. This White Paper also provided for the creation of an Adjustment Committee which was to value properties to be purchased.

The issue of the incorporation of Port St Johns was again raised in the South African Parliament in September of 1974, and then again during the consideration of the first report of a select committee on Bantu Affairs in May of 1975. In regard to Port St Johns, the Minister said during the debate on this report, "that after thorough consideration, we came to the conclusion that Port St Johns could not prosper for all times as a white spot in these changed circumstances; it would also be unfair to leave the small isolated community to itself or to

the Transkei, and of course it would also be undesirable to subsidize or to try and carry it artificially from outside. Apart from these considerations, Port St Johns forms a natural unit with the Transkei.⁴⁵⁾ This was the first official indication that Port St Johns would fall under a black authority.

As far as the time that it would take to purchase white properties and finalize government consolidation plans was concerned, the Minister said that "it would be extremely unwise of me to mention a date or a period here, since the whole process is dependent on various social, economic and financial considerations.... the Departmental machinery of my Department, and the Department of Agricultural Credit and Land Tenure..... has already been adjusted in a way to allow of purchases being effected on a far larger scale than in the past. As more funds are made available by Parliament for land purchases, so the rate of the purchase can be accelerated."⁴⁶⁾ An amount of R25 million was voted for the purchase of land during the 1974-75 budget year. The Minister continued, "I want to give the assurance to the white farmers who want to part with their land.... that the government will expedite the process of the acquisition of land as far as possible within the limits of financial circumstances."⁴⁷⁾

Land owners were therefore at the mercy of the government and the availability of finances. At this stage there was no clarity on the position of small property owners.

Besides the availability of funds for compensation, people wanted to know what compensation they were to receive and when. The stage at which people could leave Port St Johns should they wish, was determined by the availability of funds and the criteria of priorities in deciding who to first compensate. A further factor compounding the uncertainty prevailing amongst the people of Port St Johns, was that in view of the

Transkei becoming independent in October of 1976, and the incorporation issue now settled, the whites of Port St Johns would then be living in a foreign state.

In December of 1975, a circular letter was sent to all property owners by the South African government. In a Parliamentary debate, the Minister elaborated on this circular by saying that one of the priorities of this circular was to first purchase township land so that it could not be developed and later become more expensive to acquire by the Bantu Trust. The next priority was to consider the properties of "sick people, and people who cannot continue with their work, and we consider estate cases and court orders, and so on."⁴⁸⁾

The procedure that the whites of Port St Johns had to follow in selling their properties, was that they had to complete a form, which was submitted through the local magistrate, to the Adjustment Committee and the Black Trust which would then make an offer to buy the property. This procedure was to be followed if the white property owner could not find a black buyer through advertising. If properties were advertised, the advertisement would be "meant for Black owners, the colour group which should be the ultimate owners of the Transkei."⁴⁹⁾

However, a white could not sell to a black, unless the property lay in a released or black zoned area. Should a black acquire a property in a white area, then "the State President would have been required to grant a black buyer permission to own a property in a white area."⁵⁰⁾ Few blacks at the time could afford to purchase white properties at their normal market value, and therefore, white property owners, if they wanted to sell their properties, were almost compelled to sell them to the Black Trust. When this procedure was adopted,

properties were sold to blacks for considerably reduced prices. An example of this was a property which was bought from a white in Port St Johns for R39 000 and sold for R8 000 to a black Transkeian.

In June of 1976, with the impending independence of the Transkei, the recently formed Transkei White Citizens' Association (TWCA) began to interest itself in the plight of the white property owners of Port St Johns, as well as the whites in the Transkei as a whole. Through the local white Member of the South African Parliament, Mr T G Hughes, this Association petitioned Parliament, "for leave to be heard at the Bar of the House by counsel in opposition to the provisions of the Transkei Bill." This Bill provided for the eventual legal independence of the Transkei. The motion also requested that "such counsel be heard at the Bar of the House at such time as the House may direct", and also requested that "a select committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the position of the South African citizens presently owning property in the Transkei." 51)

A request to be heard at the Bar of the House, was an unusual one in South African parliamentary tradition, and is an indication of the desperation of the white property owners in the Transkei at the time. As explained by Mr Hughes in the ensuing debate, the motivation behind the petition was that white residents in the Transkei wanted the assurance that they could sell their property, and leave the Transkei when they wished. No provision had been made in the Status of Transkei Bill for compensation for South African citizens who owned properties and businesses in the Transkei after independence. The petitioners were also perturbed about the meagre funds that had been set aside by the Government for the acquisition of properties. Moreover, these citizens were not satisfied with the priority scheme as set out in the 1964 White Paper. They felt that this priority scheme should fall away, and

their properties be bought out immediately. They were also unhappy about the payment for properties by means other than ready cash. These citizens therefore wanted legislation to protect them after independence, and guarantee them compensation and sufficient funds so that those who wished to sell their properties and leave before independence could do so. They believed that after independence, the South African Parliament would have no right to interfere in the affairs of the Transkei.

The Minister replied to the main provisions of the petition by saying that properties had been bought in terms of the provisions of the White Paper for the past twelve years. He moreover said that there was an agreement in existence between the Transkeian and the South African government as regards the purchasing and compensation awarded for properties. The Minister pointed out that Clause 5 of the Status Bill provided for pre-existing rights and agreements to become binding after independence. He consequently dismissed the proposal to submit a petition to parliament.

Mr Hughes replied to the Minister by saying, "what the people of the Transkei wanted was legislation which can force the government to take action. There is nothing which gives them any rights... They want an Act which states that the Government 'shall' buy, not that this government can enter into a contract with the Transkei Government that the Bantu Trust 'may' buy."⁵¹) The crucial part of Mr Hughes argument was that properties 'may' be bought by the Bantu Trust; it was not obligatory on the Bantu Trust to buy white properties, and moreover these properties could be purchased at prices which "may be approved by the Minister"⁵²) The question was also posed as to what would happen if white properties in an independent Transkei were nationalised, or a capital gains tax was imposed on the proceeds from a sale. Questions of this nature created a great deal of uncertainty amongst property owners in Port St Johns.

Later in the debate, the Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development Dr A P Treunecht stated that, "it is financially and administratively impossible to buy all the land and properties from whites in the Transkei before 26th October." ⁵³⁾

The Deputy Minister also announced that during the 1976-77 financial year, R3,5 million had been spent on the purchase of properties, and several more million Rand would be spent on the purchase of properties. He continued that "according to an agreement with the Cabinet of the Transkei, the assurance was gained that after independence, the process of land purchases would simply continue."⁵⁴⁾ These were the strongest assurances that the South African government would give its citizens in the Transkei. The provisions of the White Paper, and the policy as regards the purchase of properties in the Transkei, applied to the coloureds as well as the whites.

In May of 1976, it was reported that a South African government evaluator had begun assessing the value of white properties in Port St Johns. His findings were to be submitted to the Bantu Trust which would determine the offer to be made. It was estimated at this stage that the majority of the 271 privately owned properties in Port St Johns had been offered for sale.

The Transkei became independent on 26th October, 1976, and Port St Johns and its white and coloured residents became subjects of the Transkei government. The Transkei and South African government's policy as regards the presence of non-Transkeian property owners in the Transkei was given legislative backing with the passing of the Acquisition of Immovable Property Control Act, 1977. This legislation stated that "no person who is not a citizen of Transkei, no company in which a controlling interest is held by and on behalf of any person who is not a citizen of Transkei... shall acquire immovable property without the approval of the said

Minister." ⁵⁵⁾ This Act moreover, stated that "a testamentary disposition or intestate succession by which any person, company or body of persons would acquire or hold any immovable property.... be deemed to be a testamentary disposition of or succession in respect of the nett proceeds of such property." ⁵⁶⁾ This meant that non-Transkeian citizens, who in the case of Port St Johns, were largely South African whites, could not purchase or inherit property in this territory.

As a result of South African and Transkeian policy and legislation, the dice was definitely loaded against a white property owning class in the Transkei.

CHAPTER 5PORT ST JOHNS REVISITED 1981 - 1982

In 1981-1982, Port St Johns was revisited, and in-depth interviews were conducted amongst almost all the remaining white residents and several of the leading coloured residents. The population numbers for 1982 as compared with 1974 are as follows: 57)

	1974	1982
Number of whites	483	58
Number of coloureds	182	182
Number of white property owners	219	51
Number of coloured property owners	7	3

Of the white population in 1982, no more than approximately 48 had lived there from before the time of the announcement of incorporation. Many of the whites who had left had moved to the Cape Coast and the Natal South Coast. The numbers of the coloured population remained stagnant, and this was because many of the younger and better educated members of this group moved to centres in South Africa in search of employment. Port St Johns had changed dramatically with the major exodus of whites.

According to the 1981-1982 Municipal Voters' Roll, there were 51 white property owners, and three coloured property owners. Of the 51 white property owners, 16 were resident in Port St Johns, the remainder being resident in various parts of South Africa. All three coloured property owners resided in Port St Johns. The diminution in the number of white and coloured property owners was as a result of the purchases made by the South African Black Trust.

In 1982, approximately 25 percent of the resident white population consisted of pensioners, 25 percent farmers, 25 percent businessmen, and the remaining 25 percent, public and private enterprise employees. It appears that in 1982, approximately 30 percent of the coloured population was unemployed, and most of them belonged to the artisan group. Of the white and coloured population in 1982, seven members were seconded to the Municipality and the tourist industry by the South African government to assist in various key posts.⁵⁸⁾ These people would not have been in Port St Johns had they not been seconded by the South African government.

In the in-depth interviews, an attempt was made to discover why those residents who had lived in Port St Johns since incorporation had remained there, and why approximately 400 whites had left the town. Respondent's memories tended to be short, and they could not always readily recall all the specific events in the past which might have had a bearing on their views and decisions. Nevertheless they were fully aware of major local factors impinging on the decisions of white residents.

Some Typical Expressions of View, 1981-1982

While certain general attitude patterns could be detected amongst the community of Port St Johns in 1981-82, it was not as easy to detect links between attitudes and occupations because of the smaller number of respondents involved, as it was in 1974. Two of the questions asked in 1981-82 were "*how does life in Port St Johns compare with life before independence?*" and "*how do you see the future?*" The responses to these questions by some of the people interviewed, selected at random, are given below, since they are fairly typical of the general attitude patterns amongst the community remaining in Port St Johns in 1981-82.

A white farmer who had lived in Port St Johns all his life, believed that *"there is no difference living here now. My wife misses the social life that existed when there were more whites. There is not enough willingness on the part of the whites to include blacks. There is not much mixing between whites and blacks - this probably because of cultural differences. With a few whites in key services, standards would improve. Blacks tend to look up to the white man for leadership."* As far as the independence idea is concerned, this respondent said that, *"the Transkei is so heavily dependent upon South Africa, it cannot really cope on its own. Transkei as part of a federation is probably the answer."*

As far as the future was concerned, this respondent had recently sold his farm to the Black Trust in accordance with the procedure described earlier, and was leasing it back from the Transkei government on a month to month basis. He felt that this situation was unsatisfactory, and was trying to obtain a longer term lease agreement, but at that stage had not had any success. If he could not lease his farm on a longer term basis he would feel compelled to leave Port St Johns. In this case, the respondent's security of tenure on his farm was the determining factor as to whether he would remain in Port St Johns. Variables like an unfavourable attitude towards the black group and declining standards of various public services were not as important considerations in this respondent's decision to leave Port St Johns. This respondent was typical of other private farmers both white and coloured who wished to remain, but were also subject to short term lease agreements.

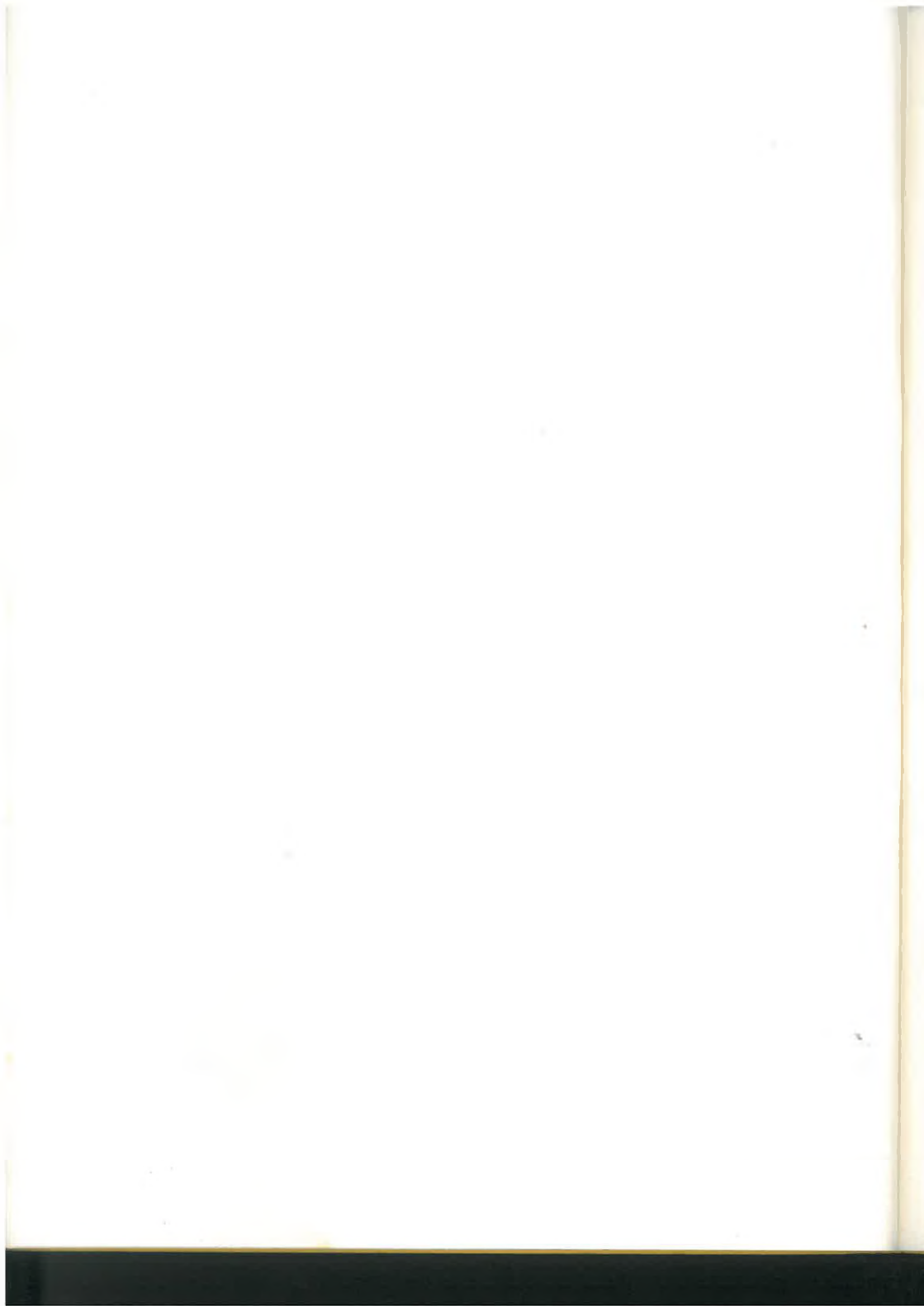
A 73 year old pensioner who had played a prominent role in the Action Committee which fought for Port St Johns to remain out of the Transkei had no intention of leaving the town. He

felt that "by and large, since independence, things had gone smoothly. People who left felt that a black police force would not look after white interests. The black police want to show the whites that they can keep order. On the whole the black police have done quite well." As regards Transkeian independence, this respondent said that, "independence is no solution to the black-white question. Independence is perhaps a start in finding a solution. Federation is probably the answer." This respondent said that he would continue living in Port St Johns for as long as conditions remained as they were. He would lose friends as people left, but he would also gain new friends. This respondent still owned property and did not seem concerned about the security of his property. The other white pensioners responded in similar ways to the same issues.

A coloured businessman who had lived in Port St Johns since 1984, and ran a clothing store and a small holding felt that "life has been good in Port St Johns since independence. Coloured people are now treated as human beings. There was a lot of discrimination before independence. Whites used to kick coloureds off the pavement. Since independence, many of the racists have gone, and other whites have changed for the better. Blacks, whites and coloureds now get on well together." This respondent was not supportive of separate development, but did admit that things had improved under the Transkei government. This respondent intended to remain in Port St Johns indefinitely.

A white hotel manager felt that "the independence idea was not a solution to the race question. Federation would probably be the answer. Blacks feel sad when many whites leave Port St Johns. The relations between black and white are good." This respondent was not a property owner, but was leaving Port St Johns because the hotel that he managed was being sold and he had a loyalty to a previous owner.

It appeared as if many of the whites, although often reluctant to talk about such matters, felt that the future under President Matanzima might be unpredictable. "He is a law unto himself" was a comment which seemed to sum up the feelings of several respondents.



CHAPTER 6THE ANATOMY OF AN EXODUSDominant Orientations in 1981 - 1982 as compared with 1974

As compared with the data in the 1974 study, the following appear to have been the keynote features of the consciousness of the remaining white community of Port St Johns in 1982;⁵⁸⁾(the 1974 percentage in brackets):

- about 80 percent (65%) were uneasy about the loss of administrative control by whites;
- nearly 80 percent (45%) were uneasy about control over the black police force;
- almost 90 percent (58%) felt uneasy about the breaking of the connection between South Africa and Port St Johns;
- about 73 percent (50%) of the population were opposed to complete racial integration;
- again another 73 percent (40%) feared an unpredictable future under the Transkeian government;
- nearly 36 percent (50%) of the population felt that their material interests would be threatened in the future;
- almost the entire population (50%) believed that blacks had not effectively absorbed "western", norms, standards and values;
- about 30 percent (65%) feared anti-white hostility, and no more than 20 percent (40%) feared physical threats to whites;
- there was virtually no anti-black hostility in 1981-1982 as compared with 55 percent in 1974;
- approximately 9 percent (55%) of the population were opposed to complete racial integration;

Factors in the Flight of Whites

The reactions of the Port St Johns community between the years 1974 and 1982 reflect a complexity of interacting factors. The ways in which each of the numerous factors influenced white and coloured reactions to the incorporation issue cannot be precisely determined. As pointed out above, respondents have short memories and cannot always recall the particular occurrences which may have influenced their attitudes. Further, there are local issues or events which influence behaviour very directly and immediately, like a good offer for a property. There are also more remote developments or series of events, perhaps in another part of Africa which might influence a person's attitudes in a less direct way. The different factors are difficult to disentangle. Nevertheless, an attempt will now be made to place the key factors that influenced white and coloured reactions in Port St Johns in some sort of perspective. An attempt will also be made to try and describe the type of person who left or remained in Port St Johns after incorporation, and to draw conclusions from this.

Historical factors: In both series of interviews, very few respondents sought historical justification for the whites leaving or remaining in Port St Johns. The few respondents who referred to the history of the area, believed that Port St Johns had been "bought" in an honest and acceptable way from the Mpondo. Nobody believed that Port St Johns had been seized from the Mpondo, and therefore this was never a reason for whites wanting to leave Port St Johns and return it to black control. Only in a very small number of cases was this historical event suggested as a reason for remaining in Port St Johns.

Previous dislocation in the Transkei: As pointed out above, 24 percent of the breadwinners affected by incorporation in 1974, had been traders in other small towns in the Transkei. They had

been extruded from other towns in accordance with "separate development" policy and had in most cases retired to Port St Johns. They were therefore well acquainted with the implications of "separate development" but had moved to Port St Johns on the basis of the assurances given to them as referred to above. The announcement of the incorporation of Port St Johns was perhaps an even greater shock to them than to others in that they would once again have to put their properties up for sale. In a few cases the reaction in the words of one respondent was, *"Oh no not again. Let me get out and be done with this as soon as possible. I want to move somewhere where I will not have to go through this ordeal again."* This factor was of lesser significance in people's decisions to leave Port St Johns as only 24 percent of the population had been affected in this way.

Political ideology: The logic and evolution of "separate development" policy and its goal of "disentangling" ethnic groups, was an unsettling factor in the minds of some whites in Port St Johns. There were people who supported the policy in its broader principle but who could not reconcile themselves to its specific consequences for their own future in Port St Johns. For some this represented a very large political dilemma. As mentioned above, 40 percent of the population of Port St Johns were United Party supporters, and this party believed that the area should not be incorporated into the Tanskei. For this group of people, the incorporation issue did not represent as great a dilemma as it did for supporters of the National and Progressive Parties which supported incorporation. This factor was again of lesser importance, however.

Material interests: As referred to above, the 1971-1972 Port St Johns Municipal Voters' Roll, contained the names of 219 property owners, of whom seven were coloured owners. If spouses were also considered to be the owners of husbands' or wives' property, then nearly 90 percent of the population of

Port St Johns in 1974, were property owners. As also mentioned above, no less than 40 percent of the residents of Port St Johns were pensioners, and most of these people had invested their life savings in their properties and in South African savings institutions. They had often carefully planned ahead so as to ensure just sufficient income to live on after their properties had been fully paid off. They were in no position to buy new properties elsewhere without receiving compensation for their existing properties in Port St Johns. They therefore feared that if Port St Johns was incorporated into the Transkei their properties might be nationalised or confiscated by the Transkeian government. A similar school of thought applied to the businessmen and farmers who were still economically active. The reaction therefore was to "join the queue" and make their properties available for sale to the "Black Trust". Besides the fear of what might happen to their properties, the whites also had a fear as to what might happen to their savings and pensions invested in "foreign" institutions. Similarly, the businessmen and farmers became concerned about the future profitability of their respective enterprises.

Immediately after the announcement, all property sales in the town ceased and the sole estate agent in the town found himself out of business. This had a trigger reaction and brought a halt to the building industry which in turn left people unemployed, reduced purchasing power and in turn depressed the activity of other businessmen. Furthermore, after the announcement the tourist industry suffered dramatically and this in turn had a further effect upon business profitability. From a material point of view there was an incentive for people to leave for towns where they could again make good profits in their respective occupational areas.

The material factor in the exodus from Port St Johns was reinforced by the offers eventually made by the South African "Black Trust" for white properties, which were in

excess of the normal market values of the properties concerned. This policy was also seen by some as compensation from the South African government for reneging on their promises to keep Port St Johns under white control, and as an inducement for whites to leave Port St Johns, and thereby assist in the "disentangling" of South Africa's multiracial society to fit in with National Party ideology. Material considerations became increasingly important as the initial emotionalism surrounding the incorporation issue began to subside.

Reduction of Vital Facilities:

As the exodus gathered momentum, whites became increasingly concerned about the shortage of medical facilities. The retired doctors who lived in the town and provided the community with medical services also left with the general migration from Port St Johns. There were moreover no hospital facilities nearby. An ageing population is more likely to require medical services than a young population, and Port St Johns had an ageing white population. Linked to this was the take-over of the telephone service by a black staff. Many respondents felt that this would mean a decline in the service and would make it more difficult to obtain medical help in an emergency. This was an important factor in making some of the older whites who were perhaps not so well, leave the town.

Physical security: Respondents were also very concerned about the physical security of their persons and properties. Some of the questions asked by property owners were, "*would a black police force protect my property from being burgled?*" Similarly, the farmer would question whether "*a black police force could and would be prepared to prevent stock or farm produce from being stolen?*" The issue of a black police force went further,

and whites would ask whether a black policeman would be prepared to "*assist a white who was being attacked by a black?*" In 1981-82, nearly double the proportion of whites in the population as compared with 1974 were uneasy about black control over a black police force. However, in 1981-82 nothing suggestive of "retribution" seemed to have been meted out to any of the whites and coloureds remaining in the town.

Uncertainty about future residential security: Before and after the announcement of incorporation, some of the statements made by Matanzima and officials of the South African government concerning land and citizenship appeared in the local daily newspaper, the Daily Dispatch and the Sunday newspapers. The Daily Dispatch was the only English language newspaper to circulate in Port St Johns, and therefore this newspaper was one of the greatest sources of information for the local people. Many of these statements carried conflicting messages and were most unsettling. For example, at one stage Matanzima said that "*the interests of the whites would be guarded after independence,*" and the South African government said that it would not "*accept final responsibility for buying out whites after independence.*" Whites in the area simply did not know where they stood in regard to their properties and future security when statements of this nature were made. Most of the communication with the residents of Port St Johns seems to have been conducted through the press. People wished to rid themselves of the protracted state of uncertainty, and the obvious way of doing this was to leave Port St Johns.

The factor of uncertainty about the future was moreover compounded by the fact that the South African government could not give any timetable as to when white and coloured properties would be purchased, and over what period of time. If a specific timetable had been agreed to by the South African and Transkeian governments as regards the purchasing of property, then the pattern of migration from Port St Johns might have been somewhat different.

Isolation from South Africa: A further important factor linked to the incorporation issue was the fear among South African citizens who remained in Port St Johns that they might be forced to relinquish their South African citizenship under a Transkeian government. There was also the fear that South African citizens remaining in Port St Johns might have to travel with a Transkeian passport and as one resident said "*where can one go on a Transkei passport?*" They also feared losing the protection of a fairly reliable and predictable South African government and enjoying only the protection of a Transkeian government with no track record.

Transkeian citizenship was perceived to hold out very few benefits for South African citizens who wished to remain in Port St Johns. The only real benefit was Transkeian citizens could own and bequeath property, whereas South African citizens could not do so. In 1981-82 very few whites remaining in Port St Johns had applied for Transkeian citizenship, and even fewer had received it. It would appear as if there was a reluctance on the part of the Transkeian government to award citizenship to whites remaining in Port St Johns, and this was a further incentive for people to leave.

Unease about black administration: The incorporation of Port St Johns and the granting of independence to the Transkei also meant that whites would lose administrative control over the civil service and police and this would result in declining standards of service. The unease over the loss of administrative control by whites had increased quite substantially between 1974 and 1981-82. These fears were vague and generally unfounded but nevertheless represented compelling emotional reactions to the changes.

Attitudinal factors and the people who remained: Some of the broad factors we have reviewed, like the historical and ideological considerations, appear to have had little bearing

on the decision to leave or stay in Port St Johns. Other factors like material interests, concern about physical and residential security, fears regarding the standards of services and health facilities as well as the concern about the consequences of possible loss of South African citizenship are much more salient. It was these factors, material and non-material interests which dominated the process of change leading to the exodus of whites from the area.

These material and non-material interests, however, were blanket factors or what can be referred to as "saturated variables", inasmuch as they represented concerns which were present among virtually everyone. What is most important is that they were also present among the few people that remained in 1982.

Some other factors, therefore, must have been present to inhibit decisions to leave, or at least to delay the decision to leave as long as possible (some of the people remaining in the town in 1982 were destined to leave). Our evidence suggests very strongly that these factors which intervened between interests and the early decision to leave, are dominant; composed of racial attitudes.

In an earlier section we discussed a factor analysis of the responses in 1974 which suggested a cluster of attitudes which we called alienation from black Transkeians was very strongly associated with an intention to leave Port St Johns. This factor analysis is confirmed by the 1981-82 interviews among people who had remained. At the latter date there was virtually no anti-black hostility whereas more than half of the 1974 respondents evinced this sentiment. Only some three out of ten people who remained specifically feared active anti-white hostility from blacks, whereas well over six out of ten feared it in 1974. In fact one of the notable features about the white group in 1981-82 was that they tended to have a greater degree of tolerance and sympathy for local blacks,

their aspirations and abilities in running essential services in the community. This tolerance did not necessarily extend to the central government and leadership of the Transkei state, but there appeared to be full acceptance of blacks as people in the local community.

It is possible, of course, that a certain amount of suppression of unfavourable racial attitudes took place in 1981-82 for fear that such attitudes might be transmitted to the Transkeian government. However, several black and coloured informants confirmed the fact that the racists in the white community had left by 1982.

The dominant tendency, both in 1974 and in 1981-1982 was for each group to associate and identify with their own group. Individual social contacts across racial lines were infrequent in 1974 and a little more frequent in 1981-82. Friendships generally tended to be formed by whites only within their white group, and one of the reasons given by white women for wanting to leave Port St Johns, was a diminishing circle of white friends. Whites found that they could not substitute coloured and black friendships for white friendships, and this would often be rationalised as being the result of "cultural differences." However, there definitely appears to have been more contact across racial lines in 1981-82 as compared with 1974, and it appears that the people more likely to be able to bridge the social gap, remained in Port St Johns in 1981-82.

The basic character of the whites who remained in Port St Johns in 1981-82 was simply different to that of the white person who had left. They were fairly well disposed towards a multi-racial society, and would even accept this approach as a solution to the greater South African racial question.

They regarded Port St Johns as their "home" and they would very often say, "*I will not be able to find another home like this.*" A few people remained there for material interests, as

they had general dealer shops well situated to benefit from the slowly recovering tourist trade. The whites who remained in Port St Johns remained there very much in defiance of the grand plan of "separate development" and sometimes on the basis of personal relationships and assurances given to them by the Transkei governmental elite which tended to see them as being of no threat to Transkeian interests.

Port St Johns compared with Mafikeng in Bophuthatswana

In 1980 the white town of Mafikeng was incorporated into the newly independent nation state of Bophuthatswana. A study⁵⁹⁾ was undertaken shortly before incorporation of the attitudes of the whites to the eventual incorporation of the town. A large majority of seven out of ten of the respondents indicated a willingness to accept incorporation. This finding has since been vindicated by the stability of the white population subsequent to incorporation.

A comparison of the findings of the present study and the Mafikeng study is useful in suggesting how the incorporation of Port St Johns might have been handled in a better way. The Mafikeng study, however, suffers from certain weaknesses in that it does not consider the events leading up to the eventual incorporation of the town, and has little to say about white attitudes towards blacks which, as we have seen, is a very important factor in shaping white reactions. The Mafikeng study is moreover not longitudinal, and therefore no definite white migration trends can be established. It appears however, that there was nowhere near as great an exodus of whites from Mafikeng after incorporation as there was from Port St Johns.

Inevitably each town had its own peculiar circumstances which had a bearing on white reactions. Comparative information on both towns is not available, but certain clues as to why whites reacted as they did might be obtained by drawing

comparisons between population composition, property ownership, images of black rulers, and the economic viability of the towns concerned. There is however, one important factor which distinguishes Port St Johns and that is it is the only white town whose residents had been told consistently over a number of years that it would "never" fall under the control of a black government.

The following figures relating to the white populations of Port St Johns and Mafikeng are of interest.

- 40 percent of the Port St Johns population was composed of pensioners compared with 11 percent in Mafikeng:
- 90 percent of the people in Port St Johns were property owners compared with 50 percent in Mafikeng.

It appears that the Mafikeng population declined only slightly after incorporation as compared with the Port St Johns population which declined to about 12 percent of its original size. It is likely therefore that pensioners and property owners react in different ways to groups with different occupational and residential interests.

Although there are no findings on attitudes among whites as regards Bophuthatswana and related issues, it would appear from hearsay evidence that the whites of Mafikeng regarded the leadership of the already independent state of Boputhatswana in a far more positive light than was the case in the Transkei or Ciskei. According to the Quail Commission Report (60) in which attitudes among a sample of whites in small towns in the eastern Cape in 1979 were analysed, some 74 percent of whites believed that black leaders in the Transkei and Ciskei (another "independent nation state" south of the Transkei) were unpredictable and could harm white interests. White perspectives of black rulers is a significant factor in their

reactions. This finding is likely to be applicable also to the whites of Port St Johns, who in 1979 were in the process of selling their properties to the "Black Trust". With such an unfavourable attitude prevailing amongst the whites of Port St Johns, the likely reaction would be to distance themselves from the town.

Another variable of major importance is the economic viability of the two towns. Port St Johns was not a boom town like Mafikeng. The economy of Port St Johns relied heavily upon tourism, and the district had limited farming potential and no light industry. In comparison, Mafikeng had booming commercial, farming and light industrial sectors. It is fairly obvious that people will move to areas of great economic activity, or remain in areas of economic activity despite political changes.

At the time of the incorporation of Port St Johns into the Transkei, The South African government seems to have been far more doctrinaire in its attitude to mixed residential areas than in more recent times. In terms of strict National Party ideology, as applied in Port St Johns the aim was to separate whites from blacks, and also not to allow a situation in which blacks ruled over a substantial group of whites. In the case of Bophuthatswana, however, this ideology was softened. In a statement issued by the two governments concerned prior to the incorporation of Mafikeng, certain provisions were made for white rights after incorporation. For example, white Municipal Officials were given the choice of either becoming seconded officials of the South African government or becoming Bophuthatswanan municipal officials receiving the same benefits as the seconded officials. This statement moreover said that "the population of Mafikeng is urged to remain there, and there are no signs of a general intention to leave, but there will be no direct or indirect pressure upon them to remain. An undertaking is therefore given that properties will be bought by the RSA if the owner cannot find a buyer in the free market

at a reasonable price. Market value is determined according to current prices of comparable properties, also in surrounding towns, and it will not be fixed higher or lower by reason of incorporation".⁶¹⁾

The approach to the incorporation of Mafikeng by the South African government was therefore quite different to that in the case of Port St Johns. The element of uncertainty and the alienation from both governments which prevailed in Port St Johns, was never allowed to arise in the case of Mafikeng. There was little incentive for whites to sell their properties in Mafikeng as they would be purchased at market value and not above market value as was the case in Port St Johns. The reassurances provided in Mafikeng went a long way to explaining the differences in white migration trends between Port St Johns and Mafikeng, and also suggest how the Port St Johns incorporation issue might have been handled differently with ultimately greater benefits to race relations.

CHAPTER 7CONCLUSIONS: A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

The announcement of the incorporation of Port St Johns into the black-ruled and soon to be independent Transkei came as a shock to the whites of Port St Johns, since it came after several convincing South African government assurances to the contrary. The initial reactions to the announcement were characterised by a great deal of emotion in the community rather than a rational assessment of the situation and of their interests. There was also a great degree of cohesion amongst the whites of the town. The initial announcement and the various protests surrounding the incorporation issue tended, therefore, to bring unlike people temporarily together. The white community as a whole felt betrayed.

As the emotionalism surrounding the incorporation issue began to subside, so did the cohesion within the community begin to diminish. People began to take more of a rational-materialist view of the situation. The issues of property, material security and of security of living became more important to the people who eventually left Port St Johns. As time went by the issues of material interests and security in general became dominant considerations in people's decisions to leave the town. Given the high prices which the South African government was prepared to pay for properties, and the failure of the Transkei government to offer concrete guarantees of security of tenure to whites, a virtual exodus of the white population was unavoidable. The Port St Johns whites departed, virtually en-masse.

In the light of the evolution of the policy goal of "separate development" and its application to Port St Johns, the South African government almost completely realised its ideological goals.

Little official concern was evident about causing an extremely traumatic experience for the entire white population. Nor was there any consideration of the future of Port St Johns because the way the incorporation issue was handled had a debilitating effect upon the economic and social conditions in the town. Political policy objectives were totally dominant in the entire exercise.

The experiences of the coloured population were not quite as traumatic as those of the whites. As a result of incorporation and Transkeian independence, the coloured people were no longer subject to the discriminatory practices which they would have experienced if they had moved to a South African city. Further, the coloureds did not have the property interests that the whites had, and also they could not look to a very secure or well defined future in South Africa. They probably would not have been much better off in terms of employment or residential opportunities in South Africa. As we have indicated a few of the younger, better educated members of the coloured community did move to South African centres in search of employment opportunities, but the older people felt that it would be better for them to remain in Port St Johns, despite the chronic housing and unemployment problems.

The pattern of events in Port St Johns between 1974 and 1982 make it extremely difficult to draw firm general conclusions as regards the dynamics of white and coloured reactions to control by a black administration. The field study in 1974 revealed that not all residents had objections to black rule of a fundamental kind. A substantial minority were prepared to accommodate the change. A group of people existed with racial and ideological attitudes which could have inclined them to accept and in a few cases perhaps even enjoy the new dispensation. The factor analysis conducted on the results of the 1974 fieldwork indicated that some whites felt a sympathy for and identification with Transkeian blacks, and that this attitude co-incided with a disinclination to leave the town.

As the incorporation issue was structured by the South African and Transkeian governments, however, virtually all whites found it to be in their interests to evacuate the town, including many, if not most of those with benign attitudes to black rule. In these conditions material interests prevailed over social attitudes. In the case of Port St Johns virtually all whites left the town. In the case of Mafikeng in Boputhatswana the same material and security interests were so structured that most whites remained in the town after incorporation, despite the fact that social and racial attitudes of a basic kind were most probably more benign than those in Port St Johns.

While material and security interests are clearly dominant, there is nevertheless some interplay between these interests and racial attitudes. This evidenced by the fact that most of the few whites remaining in Port St Johns were sympathetic to their black fellow residents and generally evinced attitudes of non-racism. In the words of some of the black people interviewed, the racists had left Port St Johns. Hence the social and racial attitudes intervened between the rational-material interests and the decision to leave in the case of some of the whites. It is notable that the few whites of the original community remaining had even more marked fears regarding future security than was typical among the whites in 1974. Hence, although marginal to the behaviour of the majority of whites, the attitudes of racial sympathy appeared to be quite powerful in influencing decisions among a minority.

One may therefore draw some tentative conclusions from the Port St Johns experience as to how people might react in similar situations. It seems clear that material interests and security of living arrangements are the most important issues in determining people's behaviour. If certain material interests like property ownership, employment and income security are guaranteed, then people may be prepared to subordinate racial prejudices to these interests, as could have

occurred in Mafikeng. Where these interests are not guaranteed, as in the case of Port St Johns, negative racial attitudes, material and security concerns combine to provide a massive impetus to avoid a situation in which the "status quo" changes. Non-racialism and black-white empathy may survive only at the margin as it were, among minorities of people who do not conform to the general trend. Much depends, of course, on how the change in the political and administrative dispensation takes place. Long time lags between statements of policy, and periods of silence and indecision on the part of the authorities involved in the decision-making processes do not facilitate the most beneficial outcome. If clear declarations had been issued in the case of Port St Johns as was the case with Mafikeng concerning property rights, economic rights and political rights, then uncertainties and fears about the future might be reduced and the Port St Johns white community would have been saved.

If official decision-making provides for the orderly replacement of whites by blacks in the public sector and the proper training of these replacements, then the unease and insecurity amongst whites as regards black administrative control might be considerably diminished. In Port St Johns this type of official programme was clearly needed — even the clearly non-racist whites required this type of assurance.

The case of Port St Johns and its consolidation into the Transkei is a perfect example of ideological considerations taking precedence over economic and social realities, in so doing undermining a potential for development and racial harmony. The South African government certainly succeeded in "disentangling" the racial intermixture which the situation represented. In the process, however, a great deal of insecurity, disillusionment and hardship was created for whites, coloureds and blacks. The South African government lost credibility by breaking clear and repeated promises, and the prospects of prosperity for the town as a unique tourist resort was set back by many years. We can only hope that these mistakes will never be made again.

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40. Tested by means of the normal Chi-squared Test, 95 percent level of confidence or higher.
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