

THE LIKELY EFFECTS OF CISKEIAN INDEPENDENCE

The SABC, in reporting on the Independence of the Ciskei, said that "more than half of South African Blacks were now nationals of foreign countries." This means that since December 4th 1981 all Ciskeians, even if born in white South Africa, have become foreigners. In the Cape where most Blacks are Transkeians or Ciskeians, almost all Blacks are now foreigners in the land of their birth.

The Quail Commission laid down five essential pre-conditions for Ciskei independence:

- (1) The majority of the Ciskeians, both resident in the in the Ciskei and in South Africa should vote in favour of independence in a fairly conducted referendum.
- (2) Non-resident Ciskeians should have the choice of South African or Ciskeian citizenship or dual citizenship, and those choosing to remain in South Africa should enjoy security of residence rights.
- (3) A consolidation of land, satisfactory to the Ciskei, should be effected.
- (4) The right of Ciskeians to be employed in South Africa should be explicitly preserved.
- (5) South Africa should provide equitable financial support to the Ciskei.

ONE has been complied with, although there are doubts as to the real significance of the huge "Yes" vote.

TWO has been ignored. Non-resident Ciskeians have lost their South African citizenship and are foreigners in the land of their birth.

THREE: Consolidation of Ciskei is going ahead with the result that thousands of people living in the nine separate areas of land are to be moved whether they wish to be or not. When finally consolidated Ciskei will be smaller than it was in 1976 because of the Herschel and Glen Grey districts ceded to the Transkei. Thousands of Ciskeians living in these districts have had to be resettled in various temporary resettlement camps and are due to be moved yet again. Besides this the population has risen because of the resettlement of Ciskeians from South Africa. + 3 500 Ciskeians have been repatriated during the last 20 years and the population has increased from 373 661 in 1970 to 633 890 in 1980 - a 69% increase of population in a country which has shrunk by 45% due to the loss of the Herschel and Glen Grey districts. The total number of people classified as Ciskeian is said to be 1 072 353 (1980 census) although the Quail Commission gave the figure as 2 090 000.

FOUR: The rights of Ciskeians who qualify for permanent residence in white areas under section 10(1) of the Urban Areas Act, to work in South Africa have been guaranteed but the rights of migrants to work there have not - they will only be allowed to work in South Africa if there is a shortage of resident Blacks. Thus,

fewer and fewer Ciskeians resident in their new Independent State will be able to obtain contracts to work in South Africa due to the natural increase of qualified Blacks.

FIVE: Ciskei has been promised adequate financial assistance and is to have priority as regards development funding.

So it is the loss of their South African citizenship which is likely to be the most devastating result of Ciskeian Independence. Last year on August 19th hundreds of squatters were rounded up, taken to Pollsmoor jail where the Ciskeians and Transkeians were separated. The Transkeians, without charge or trial, were deported under section 40(4) of Act 59/1972 - The Admission of Persons to the Republic Act. This action was repeated over and over again, both last year and this year. The Ciskeians were charged, tried and permitted to have legal defence. Just last month (February), 70 squatters were arrested and 58 Transkeians summarily deported to Umtata from where they returned within four days of their arrest. Rumour has it that in future illegal Transkeians will be arrested and jailed for six months - again without trial - without a chance to state their case, without legal representation. On release they will probably, or certainly, be deported.

So far only Transkeians have been treated in this way, but there is nothing to prevent the same fate from befalling Ciskeians now that they are "foreigners". Admittedly, only Transkeians and Ciskeians illegally in white South Africa can be deported, but what chance does any arrested Transkeian have of proving that he does qualify for permanent residence or has a permit to be in the area? One of those deported on 18/2/82 was on a legal contract with the S.A.R.&H. which does not expire until August. He had a Railway stamp in his new Travel Document and a Railway Identity Document signed every month showing that he was a legal employee.

Recently one of our legal panel applied for Legal Aid on behalf of a Transkeian who had been charged with being illegally in Cape Town. Legal Aid was at first refused on the grounds that he was a foreigner. Phone calls to Pretoria and the local Dept of Co-operation and Development finally led to his being given Legal Aid.

Transkeian migrants are no longer eligible for benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Fund to which they ceased to be contributors in October 1976 upon Independence. For three years they could still receive benefits but now are ineligible for unemployment or sick benefits under the S A Unemployment Insurance Fund. No such fund exists in Transkei so Transkeian migrants who are unemployed or ill for several months receive no aid whatever. The Black Sash approached representatives of the Transkei government to ask them to form their own U.I.F., which Boputatswana has done, but nothing has yet been done. Now that Ciskei is independent, Ciskeian migrants will no longer be contributors to the U.I.F. and after a three year moratorium will not receive any benefits.

The population of Ciskei - 630 353 - is equally divided between rural and urban areas. 80% of the urban population live in Mdantsane (the second largest black city in South Africa, 12

miles from East London), Zwelitsha just outside King Williams Town, and in the township of King Williams Town and East London. + 150 000 people have been resettled in Ciskei since 1970 and the population consists of an unnaturally high percentage of women, old people and children. Urban unemployment is 25-35%, and rural employment does not really exist at all. There are 33 factories, 29 of which are in Dimbasa, and these employ 3 500 people. Only 15% of Ciskei is suitable for dry land farming, but the irrigable potential is only 2% of the surface area; agricultural production cannot meet the food requirements of the people. In 1975 it was found in two rural communities that only 40% of the families grew sufficient food for their requirements.* The position is even worse today. Ciskei has no mineral deposits, not enough food for its inhabitants, and is left with only one resource - its labour. It relies on exporting labour to all parts of South Africa and has a very sophisticated form of labour control. All migrant workers are registered and employers' reports on their conduct are fed into the data bank. Preference is given to those with experience and a clean work record. What chance would a man have if he had been dismissed for striking?

It would appear that under President Sebe the Ciskei government is likely to bar trade unions in the Ciskei in the near future. 200 Ciskeian Trade Unionists were detained during 1981 and recently Major General Charles Sebe, head of the Ciskeian intelligence service said it was time for the government to make a decision whether or not to ban the S A Allied Workers Union (SAAWU). President Sebe, at his first press conference after independence, described labour unrest as an "intolerable disease". The Sebes want Ciskeian labourers "to be sought after as desirable employees".

Ciskei is utterly dependent on South Africa for finance (79%), for development capital and skills, for markets and raw materials, as well as for job opportunities. Some people have done well out of Independence, such as chiefs and headmen, public servants, teachers (who are better paid) and traders, but the landless rural poor in resettlement camps and elsewhere and the workers in Dimbasa, East London, Berlin and King Williamstown stand to gain nothing whatever as a result of it.

* Daniel and Webb 1980

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