

the party in power. The bandwagon syndrome has been identified in voting behaviour all over the world. It would certainly explain the unanimity of Ciskeian voters within the Ciskei. In such a situation the vote may be seen as a response to a particular power situation.

Ciskeians outside the homeland itself are not subject to the same pressures, unless of course they are migrant workers. Permanently urbanised Ciskeians do not see the Ciskei government as fulfilling any positive function for them, nor as exercising power over them. They are free to associate, or disassociate themselves from the homeland. A goodly number have chosen the latter path. And admonitions from academics to participate in such opportunities for political expression as the system offers, are unlikely to change their attitudes. (1)

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1. Schlemmer: in Sunday Times: 4/1/81
 2. The Friend: 25/11/80

4. DOES THE REFERENDUM CONSTITUTE A MANDATE FOR INDEPENDENCE?

For large numbers of Ciskeians 'independence' has been presented as a desirable goal. "It is a promissory note guaranteeing all men the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." (2)

The referendum certainly demonstrates considerable internal support. The fruits of independence will determine whether that support will be able to be maintained without the use of force. In the end the electoral appeal of a political party, or a leader rests on ability to produce goods, material or cultural which satisfy the aspirations of the most significant groups in that society. Chief Sebe's regime, whether independent or not, will have to earn its legitimacy like any other regime by satisfying the aspirations of its people, of the chiefs, civil servants, the emerging entrepreneurs and professional people; but also of the workers in the factories of East London, the landless rural poor being re-patriated in their thousands from the urban and rural areas of 'white' South Africa. □

SABATA DALINDYEBO

Paramount Chief Sabata Dalindyebo (A! Jonguhlanga! — he who looks to the nation!) was born, as he lived, in the centre of controversy (25 November 1928). His father had died suddenly some five months earlier before marrying his official Great Wife. Many years later, George Matanzima would say that old Mhlobo Matanzima had been instrumental in selecting Sabata as heir, but the truth of the matter seems to be that he was unanimously chosen by a national meeting of the Thembu people (September 1929) because his mother outranked the three other wives of the late Jogilizwe.

After a stormy school career — he was expelled at least once and never matriculated — Sabata faced up to his regent and guardian (Chief Dabulamanzi Dalindyebo) who refused to present him for circumcision. Backed once again by the full Thembu council, Sabata took the matter to court and forced the issue. He was duly circumcised, and on 30 June 1954, installed as Paramount Chief of the Thembu.

Almost immediately, Sabata and his advisers found themselves locked in conflict with Kaiser D. Matanzima who, at that point, ranked no higher officially than senior chief of St Marks District. K.D. was, however rather older (thirteen years) and considerably better educated (qualified as an attorney) than the young Paramount. Moreover, he had from a very early stage recognised the possibilities of the Bantu Authorities system, which the then Minister of Native Affairs, Dr H. Verwoerd, was busily setting up. Matanzima claimed to be Paramount Chief of 'Emigrant Thembuland', an administrative division set up in 1865 by the Colonial authorities on land confiscated from hostile Xhosa and given to Thembu collaborators. Foremost among these was the first Matanzima, Kaiser's great-grandfather and truly the founder of a family tradition.

Sabata naturally resisted Kaiser's claims which cut back his own authority and divided the Thembu nation into two. But the Government Anthropologist upheld Matanzima —

hardly surprising, since K.D. was a 'Progressive' chief while Sabata's secretary, Jackson Nkosiyané was well known as a vigorous opponent of the South African government and all its works, from tribal authorities to rehabilitation schemes. In 1958, K.D. was recognised as chief of 'Emigrant Thembuland', while Sabata was told that any further "impertinent letters" would result in his deposition. Nkosiyané and other "undesirable advisers" were banished.

Sabata did not waver in the face of this dire example. In 1961, he organised a meeting of some thousand chiefs and headmen to protest against rehabilitation. According to one historian, "in 1963 the Engcobo and Umtata districts were said by police to be the most violent districts in the Transkei."

Sabata supported Victor Poto's Democratic Party against Matanzima in the 1963 elections to the Transkei Legislative Assembly, and he stood by the opposition through Matanzima's successive electoral triumphs, through the defection of Tutor Ndamase (Poto's heir), and, finally, through the disintegration of the Democratic Party itself. Initially, he refrained from open support of either Hector Ncokazi's radical Democrats or Knowledge Guzana's Parliamentarists. But as the former gave way to repression and the latter to irrelevance, he increasingly allied himself with the radicals.

Sabata is reputed to be somewhat erratic in his personal habits ("his path is strewn with broken bottles" runs one line of his praises) and he had no intellectual pretensions. He preferred to leave most of the talking in the Legislative Assembly to his representative (and leading D.P. radical), Florence Mancotywa. Nevertheless, his moral authority was immense. Alone among his fellow-chiefs, he resisted the power and luxury which were his for the asking. Alone, he persevered in obstinate and implacable opposition to Kaiser Matanzima and to the very conception of Transkeian

independence. Alone in Transkei, he dared to say aloud what many others were thinking. Outside of Parliament, he was a powerful and hard-hitting speaker. He called the Matanzima brothers "spies and good boys for the South African government". He called Transkei independence "settling for a fowl-run". And, cutting through the bland official rhetoric which no one in Transkei questions or believes, he delivered the following analysis of K.D.'s well-publicised request (1976) for the release of Nelson Mandela: "They say to the Government 'We want the world to know that we have asked for their release, but don't release them'. If Mandela were brought to the Transkei, I am definitely sure nobody else will be voted for, whether as Prime Minister or as President".

Transkei independence and the Transkei Security Act deprived Sabata of any protection but his high rank and popular respect. His election, in March 1979, as leader of the new Democratic Progressive Party (the rump of the old opposition added to Stella Sigcau's essentially opportunistic Eastern Mpondo breakaway) made him paradoxically more vulnerable. Leading his party in the non-confidence debate of that year, he said, "Let me say we have no confidence in the Government and we feel insecure. We feel so unsafe that literally we feel we may be shot at any time".

Insulated, perhaps, by the belief that Kaiser, his cousin and 'junior' in traditional terms, would accord him due respect (later, in prison, he wrote to Kaiser that their common ancestors had appeared to him in a dream and expressed their shock at his condition — that a King of the

Thembu should be found in such a place), Sabata plunged on. In June 1980 he told a party rally that "the Transkei President visited Pretoria at the insistence of the Boers and accepted independence on terms dictated by them, that the President had an abundance of the necessities of life whilst his people had to live on excreta, and that the President maltreated his people".

For this, and for a casual remark published by a reporter that the Transkei passport was a "useless piece of paper", Sabata was arrested (by police and armoured cars) and indicted for subverting the sovereignty of Parliament and the constitutional independence of Transkei, and for violating and injuring the dignity of the State President. He was found guilty on the latter charge and fined R700 or 18 months. K.D. was not prepared to let him off so lightly. The time had come to break Sabata once and for all. It was suggested to the Dalindyebo Tribal Authority that Sabata should be disciplined for his gross offence. Sabata's councillors tried to placate the government by adding another R100 onto the fine, but this was not what the brothers were after. On the 6th of August 1980, he was deposed and by the 11th he had fled. (Later that same month, Minister Saul Ndzumo, suddenly fallen from favour died in prison).

The flight of Sabata Dalindyebo, the last major public figure to oppose the increasingly repressive regime of the brothers Matanzima, marks the end of an era in Transkei. We may be sure that opposition will not disappear altogether, but that it will henceforth manifest itself in more sudden, violent and unexpected forms. □

LAW

God's sea comes streaming in —
day after day, century upon century —
against God's sandy shore.

Human beings watch the sacred process with customary
awe,

but some with reservations:
upon the beach —
at day so striking,
at night so lonely —
they set their mark:

"For Whites Only". □

Vortex