

NATAL PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

MEMORANDUM

SUBMITTED BY THE ADMINISTRATOR-IN-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PROVINCE OF NATAL TO THE COMMISSION FOR THE DETERMINATION OF REGIONAL BOUNDARIES IN A FUTURE SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION PRESENTED BY MR V A VOLKER M E C AND MR D W MAKHANYA M E C TO A COMMITTEE OF THE COMMISSION SITTING IN KOKSTAD ON THE 23RD SEPTEMBER 1993.

INTRODUCTION

We will not take up the Commission's time by going into the history of the East Griqualand area as we are confident that this has been adequately addressed in other submissions to the Commission during its current sitting. Should the Commission so desire, a copy of the 1976 Steyn report which led to the incorporation of East Griqualand into Natal will be made

available to the Commission.

It is also not our intention today to address matters relating to agriculture and economic development in any detail as these issues would have also been addressed in other submissions to

the Commission.

This submission will therefore primarily address the area of public administration and the rendering of public services, and, efficient public management in the context of regional

(or provincial) government.

For the convenience of the Commission, the submission has been set out under Headings which correspond to the criteria relevant to the Commission's terms of reference.

## HISTORICAL BOUNDARIES

These too will have been adequately addressed in other submissions.

We do, however, wish to point out that the present Joint Services Board and RDA development boundaries have been determined as an integral part of Economic Region E. This has significance for current physical and developmental planning.

It is also worthwhile to point out that the boundaries that have been in place since the 1976 incorporation of East Griqualand into Natal have gained historical significance in their own right. They have now been in place for more than fifteen years and administration, commerce, educational activities, agriculture and infrastructural development have all taken place within the context of those boundaries and the legal and economic factors which operate within them. In a

nutshell, the Administratorâ\200\224-in-Executive Committee of Natal and many other institutions in Natal, both economic and cultural, have come to accept East Griqualand as an integral part of Natal and to take East Griqualand into account in all planning.

## ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

This is naturally the main area of concern for the Natal Provincial Administration. Administrative considerations will be discussed under a number of subheadings.

The administration of justice

Should East Griqualand not be incorporated into a future Natal it would follow that the seat of the Supreme Court for the area would also move. This would mean that interaction between the Attorney- General and Prosecutors as well as between the legal profession and the Courts would be made more difficult. It must also be remembered that the regional

legislatures will enact their own body of regional law.

In criminal cases on appeal from magistrates courts situated in East Griqualand there would be considerable inconvenience to witnesses, investigating officers and even the accused as great distances would have to be travelled to Supreme Court hearings. The same would apply in the case of civil litigation. In this context we would respectfully draw attention to the criteria of limiting future expenditure and inconvenience to citizens.

As we move into a more democratic constitutional State where the role of the Courts as protector of the individual is emphasized, access to the Supreme Court not only from a legal-technical point of view, but also physically, is going to be of great importance. Physical access to the Supreme Court without excessive travelling cost will be of particular importance to the poorer members of the community.

## Education

It would be a lot easier for the schools in East Griqualand to receive support services of a specialised nature, such as psychological service and subject advisory services, from Pietermaritzburg and/or Durban, than it would be for them to receive similar support from more distant centres of administration were East Griqualand to be incorporated into the region to the south of Natal. In similar context; the supply of library books and the resupply of books from central book depots, both from the Education Department and for public Libraries, would be that much more difficult if it has to be

done over a great distance.

The current educational arrangements in East Griqualand (of course now within segregated education departments) are based upon Pietermaritzburg and/or Durban. The rationalisation of Education Departments into a single nonracial regional education department will be common to all the new regions. In the case of East Griqualand schools, this will be the least disruptive if they are rationalised within their present

educational region.

What is being said under the heading of "Education" naturally applies to all cultural activities including provision of museum services.

## Health Services

It is probably even more true of Health Services that support of a specialised nature can be rendered more readily from Durban and Pietermaritzburg than it could be from a distant administrative centre in the southern region. This is especially significant in relation to emergency services.

Road access to Pietermaritzburg and Durban is over relatively good roads. Helicopter access to Pietermaritzburg and Durban

is quick.

In this regard it is important to bear in mind that the hospitals in East Griqualand are already currently in an integral part of Natal Health Services. Therefore the

purchasing of supplies and medicines for these hospitals forms

part of the existing Natal arrangements. Should East Griqualand remain within Natal this process will go on uninterrupted and without any chance of patient care being prejudiced by changes in administration and the greater

distances to be covered.

Road and other transport systems

One of the areas most critical to the convenience of citizens and particular to the prosecution of successful commercial operations is the existence of an efficient transport system.

That transport system will find expression in three areas, road transport, rail transport and air transport. In all of these areas

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these areas the existing infrastructure is based upon links to Pietermaritzburg and Durban. The road transport system from the Midlands of Natal or from the South Coast is of a particularly good standard. There can be no doubt that from the point of view of trade and recreation the people of East Griqualand at all levels will continue to primarily look towards the Natal South Coast, the Natal Midlands and Durban.

Durban is the nearest major port to East Griqualand. Transport costs to East London or Port Elizabeth could be

prohibitive and inhibit the development of the area.

#### Welfare Services

Pensioners in East Griqualand are serviced from Durban or Pietermaritzburg. Thus the pension payment system for Black pensioners is currently linked to the Directorate of Welfare Services in Pietermaritzburg and by computer through to the central welfare information system in Pretoria. Any switch for the payment of pensions could lead to disruption with

disastrous consequences for the poorest group in our society.

What has been said of pensions administration which, incidentally, also includes disability grants, foster care grants and military pensions, is also true of other welfare services. These services are all based on either Pietermaritzburg or Durban. It will make little sense to now render these services from a distant regional capital.

## Community Development Services

The Natal Provincial Administration Community Services Branch has already built up extensive knowledge of the East Griqualand area. It would be a great shame if the current developmental initiatives in the area were to be interrupted by the transfer of East Griqualand to the jurisdiction of another regional authority. The planning is going ahead in consultation with the communities.

As East Griqualand is part of economic development Region E, the economic/spatial planning for Natal incorporates East Griqualand. Macro planning also takes East Griqualand into account. Should East Griqualand now be severed from Natal this could very seriously prejudice the area from the point of view of economic development. The physical planning component of the community services Branch has mapped out the location of informal settlements and studies are being undertaken as to the extent to which these informal settlements can be assisted to help themselves to improve their quality of life. Such interaction with communities to ensure that things are done with the communities and not for the communities is one of the benefits of regional government as against central government.

The developmental support therefore, that the East Griqualand area receives from Natal and the expertise available, would be a drain on the resources of the Transkei Region were it to have to take over this task.

The Natal Provincial Administration is currently actively supporting moves in East Griqualand towards non-racial

local government and it would be a pity if this process were to be interrupted. Once again, distance would

reduce the effectiveness of support by regional government to local government.

Other governmental services

From the point of view sound public management the shorter the distance the local office has from its Head Office the easier it is for the latter institution to provide relief services, arrange training seminars, send in reinforcements where applicable, interact and respond to representations submitted by "mlocal: - offices. In the following cases, a total reorganisation of llinks through to either regional Head Offices, or where the function becomes a regional function, the actual main Head Office, will have to take place should

East Griqualand be severed from Natal:

South African Police, South African Correctional Services, South African Defence Force (Natal Command), Natal Region Water Affairs and Forestry,

Natal Region Department of Agriculture.

In all these instances regional offices are either in Durban or Pietermaritzburg and support can be provided from those centres.



There are also other provincial services based upon the provincial headquarters in Pietermaritzburg which will become part of the functions of the new regional government, these include: the Road Traffic Inspectorate, Motor Licensing function, the Civil Protection function and Nature Conservation through the medium of the Natal Parks Board

In addition to these two aforementioned strictly governmental areas of operation there are a number of parastatal bodies which will also have their regional Headquarters based either in Durban or Pietermaritzburg. Here one thinks of Telkom, Transnet, Eskom, the Natal Performing Arts Council in its restructured form addressing a wider and less eurocentric cultural need, and the like.

In concluding the discussion of administrative/governmental services it is necessary to emphasize the extent to which government operates on computer based systems at this time. These systems rely upon main line links to centres with large computer mainframes containing various data bases. In some instances (as illustrated under the reference to welfare services) these link through to data bases in Pretoria or elsewhere in the Republic. Whilst the links to East

Griqualand might not have reached a high level of

sophistication at this stage, there is no doubt that this will increase both in government and in commerce. The long distances if these have to be linked to another regional Capital a great distance away will be both technically

difficult and extremely expensive.

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#### THE NEED TO RATIONALISE EXISTING STRUCTURES/SERVICES

We are aware that the question of Umzimkulu is being addressed by many of the parties submitting evidence to the Commission. We would express an opinion that the retention of Umzimkulu as an enclave apart from the Natal region is illogical. In fact to retain Umzimkulu as part of another region would be a

memorial to the follies of past policies.

We would concur that there is a really great need to rationalise structures and services. We believe that the severance of East Griqualand from Natal and its linking to a distant Capital would be the direct opposite of

rationalisation.

#### THE NEED TO LIMIT FINANCIAL COST

The arguments advanced under the heading of administrative factors all point to the fact that were East Griqualand to be severed from Natal there would be an increase in cost in terms of communication, distances to be physically travelled by

individuals, technical data systems and the links thereto, the replacement of systems currently compatible with Natal systems

with those applied in the southern region etc.

What has been said in relation to governmental activities and public services is no doubt also true in relation to

agriculture, commerce and industry.

## THE NEED TO MINIMISE INCONVENIENCE TO THE PEOPLE OF AN AREA

Once again the arguments advanced under administrative matters indicate that to move East Griqualand further away from its regional Capital will inconvenience the citizenry in the interaction with regional government and the provincial divisions of the Supreme Court. It will also place a citizenry far further from the Legislative Assembly and therefore make more difficult interaction between voter and representative, particularly when the Legislative Assembly is in session.

Changes in administrative procedures could also inconvenience Agriculture, Commerce and Industry as well as individual people should the systems currently in operation be changed to those in operation in the new region to the south.

## NEED TO MINIMISE DISLOCATION OF SERVICES

We submit that this has been adequately illustrated in our arguments above. The substitution of a new system of regional government for the current one will be doubly traumatic for East Griqualand. The rest of Natal/KwaZulu is faced with being placed under a new regional government whereas East Griqualand would not only face the fact of entering a new constitutional system but also being moved to be placed under an entirely new administrative regime. If retained in Natal, there would be....

there would be a very large measure of continuity in all spheres of public administration with virtually no dislocation in the rendering of services. We believe that this is particularly important in relation to those who are least able to afford travel or deal with government by

correspondence.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

We believe that the demographic factors can be addressed very simply by saying that the people of East Griqualand are currently part of Natal. In their diversity they will remain East Griqualanders within Natal and therefore Natalians. There will not be any change if they remain in Natal. It will not increase the population of Natal nor increase the burden

on the resources of the province (or region or state).

#### ECONOMIC VIABILITY

The arguments advanced in the foregoing paragraphs point to the fact that the economic viability of the region may indeed be harmed by severing it from Natal and its naturally

economic, educational, cultural, as well as administrative

links to Pietermaritzburg and to the port of Durban.

As stated above we have relied upon other bodies to argue the economic perspective but this does not mean that the Executive Committee is not entirely persuaded that it would neither be to the advantage of East Griqualand nor of the rest of Natal

for East Griqualand to be severed from the Province.

#### DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

In the light of the interaction between the area itself and the seat of regional government and the resources in terms of expertise in the public sector or/and the private sector which are to be found in the Durban/Pietermaritzburg axis, the development potential of East Griqualand, like its economic viability, will be adversely affected were it to be severed

from Natal.

#### CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE FACTORS

Here again, the people of East Griqualand in all their diversity have officially been part of Natal now for more than 15 years. Before that and since Union they might have been officially part of the Cape Province, but their social and economic links - even then - were with Natal.

For them to remain part of Natal would bring no new pressures which adversely affect their cultural or language interests.

## CONCLUSION

An apology is tendered if some of the arguments advanced in this memorandum are repetitive. This can hardly be avoided as arguments under one heading are equally cogent under another. The Executive Committee expresses its very firm opinion that

East Griqualand should be part of the new region of Natal and that Umzimkulu should now also be included in Natal.

RR/WD/sma

22 September 1993