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## APARTHEID, URBAN SEGREGATION, AND THE LOCAL STATE: DURBAN AND THE GROUP AREAS ACT IN SOUTH AFRICA<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** There has been some speculation about the origins of the Group Areas Act (GAA), one of the key instruments used to enforce the ideology of apartheid. This paper examines the origins, development, and implementation of the Group Areas Act in Durban. The key argument of this paper is that the anti-Indian agitation of the Durban City Council and its White electorate played an important role in the development of the legislation. Whites in Durban were at the forefront of calls for the compulsory segregation of Indians because this group presented a serious threat in terms of competition for social and economic space. The local state in Durban worked closely with the central state and played a key role in the formulation and implementation of the Group Areas Act. In all of the race zoning proposals for the City of Durban, the views of the White electorate were considered by the local state, but those of the disenfranchised Indians were disregarded. The local state in Durban was, however, forced to review its race zoning plans when it became apparent that the central state expected it to bear the costs of uprooting hundreds of thousands of people. Despite numerous appeals by the local state and Indian political and civic organizations, the spatial impress of the central state was imposed upon the local state.

The geographical landscape in South Africa (physical, social, cultural, political, and economic) has been profoundly influenced by the policy of apartheid, which constitutes an unparalleled example of state-directed socio-spatial structuring (Smith, 1982, 1992). The Group Areas Act (GAA) of 1950 was one of the key instruments used to reinforce the ideology of apartheid. It served as a powerful tool for state intervention in controlling the use, occupation, and ownership of land and buildings, a racial basis, and emphasized separate residential areas, educational services, and other amenities for the different race groups (Maharaj, 1992a).

There has been a great deal of research on the historical aspects of urban segregation in South Africa (Crush, 1992; McCarthy, 1992). Although there have been some interesting case studies on the impact of the GAA in specific localities (e.g. Western, 1981; Christopher, 1987; Hart, 1988), the origin and implementation of the act has not been the subject of "serious research" (Mabin, 1992, p. 405). The existing literature is seriously deficient in tackling the evolution of the system by which groups were declared and there is little focus on the historical process" (Mesthr-

1992, p. 2). Unlike other aspects of apartheid (e.g., bantustans and bantu education), the GAA had not been preceded by a commission that served to legitimize the state's ideological discourse. This "lapse" has been responsible for the "implicit acceptance of 'group areas' simply as an inevitable part of apartheid" (Mabin, 1992, p. 406).

There has, however, been some speculation about the origins of the GAA. Since the 1950s, several scholars have suggested that the anti-Indian agitation of the Durban City Council (DCC) and its White electorate played a key role in influencing the development of the legislation (e.g., Kuper et al., 1958; Meer, 1975; Western, 1981; McCarthy and Smit, 1984). In contrast, Mabin (1992, p. 407) argued that to view the act as being targeted against Indians, and the DCC as "primary agitator in its cause is clearly inadequate."

Recently, several scholars have argued that the Indian question and the role of the DCC in developing the GAA was significant and worthy of further investigation. According to Mesthrie (1992, p. 23), the development of the GAA "owes its origins to the initiatives of the DCC." According to Southworth (1991, p. 4), the GAA "sought to solve the 'Asiatic question' by making life so miserable that they would repatriate to India." Also, it has been suggested that an important purpose of the GAA was to "reverse the increasing power and stature of South African Indians—half of whom lived in Durban—within the South African economy" (Southworth, 1988, p. 2). James (1992, p. 53) argued that the "origins of the GAA and residential segregation under apartheid were rooted in attempts to restrict the entitlements of Indians in Natal." More specifically, the Durban City Council was a prime mover in the "formulation and implementation of the GAA of 1950" (James, 1992, p. 53). Freund (1995, p. 64) identified two "trajectories" in the initiation of the GAA:

The first was white racism, the desire to define Durban as a city built around a white core. Indians were to be expunged from this core with little say on their own position in the urban environment. However, at the same time, the Group Areas idea was closely allied to notions of progress, hygiene and modernity.

The first "trajectory" forms the focus of this paper. Attempts have been made to examine aspects of the second trajectory in different localities (e.g., Parnell, 1988; Robinson, 1990; Mabin, 1992; Scott, 1994).

This paper examines, primarily from the perspective of urban political geography, the origin, development, and implementation of the GAA in Durban. The focus will be on Durban since the turn of the century and on state attempts to segregate Indians by reducing their access to housing and land. Although the development of apartheid has conventionally been associated with the central state, this paper will highlight the role of the local state in influencing the central state in the implementation of the GAA, and it will reveal how local imperatives and contingencies in the Durban area led to demands for segregation. It also will draw attention to the contested processes that led to group areas zoning and will highlight the tensions and conflicts in the relationship between the central and local state with regard to the segregation of Indians in Durban.

The focus on Durban is significant, because that city often has been regarded as a "pioneer in the establishment of urban segregation in South Africa" (Maylam, 1985, p. 47). Furthermore, although the historical development of urban segregation in

South Africa has focused on the analysis of the role of compounds and locations (e.g., Mabin, 1986; Robinson, 1990), this

cannot be generalised for Durban because of the historical development of indentured Indian labour which constitutes a very significant part of the working class in Durban (Padayachee and Haines, 1985, pp. 20–21).

The focus on Indians is important for several reasons. Although there is the smaller of the four population groups in South Africa, numbering about one million, the proportional impact of the GAA "has been borne most heavily by the Indians, with one in four of them having been resettled" (Western, 1981, p. 81). Furthermore, the Indian community has had an "unrecognised or discounted role in the inception of segregation in South Africa as a whole" in scholarly analysis (Swanson, 1983, p. 76). More recently, Parnell (1987, pp. 134–135) has suggested that "the question of residential restriction for the Indian community offers a topic whose exploration would complement and expand current understanding of the segregation process."

The data for this paper were derived from a variety of primary documentary sources, ranging from official central and local government records and newspaper reports to memoranda prepared by extra-parliamentary organizations. This paper is divided into seven sections. The first examines the early attempts by the local state in Durban to segregate Indians, prior to the GAA. The second section analyzes the anti-Indian basis of the GAA, and the third the dynamics of race zoning in Durban. The local state's capitulation to White voters is discussed in the fourth section, and the failure of Indian protest and resistance to the GAA in the fifth. A following section explores fiscal realities and central-local state conflict, and a final section examines local state vacillation and the ultimate triumph of the central state.

## THE INDIAN QUESTION AND RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION

Indians came to South Africa as indentured laborers to work the sugar cane fields in Natal, and, upon completion of their contracts, they were expected to return to India. However, the demand for labor was so great that they soon were absorbed into skilled and semi-skilled activities in industry and commerce. They were followed by Indian traders, whose successful competition against White traders generated a great deal of conflict and hatred. Politicians from diverse parties were unanimous on one issue—the Indian population in South Africa should be reduced to the minimum possible. The main mechanisms to achieve this were constraints on tenure and occupation of land, severe limitations on trading rights, restrictions on immigration and registration, and denial of the right to vote (Mataraj, 1992b).

The Durban City Council, representing the White ruling class, was at the forefront of calls for the repatriation and segregation of Indians. The DCC traditionally has been dominated by English-speaking United Party supporters. The Whites of Durban were more concerned about the "Asiatic menace" than the "Native problem." Natives were perceived as a passive threat, but Indians were regarded as a "sophisticated and active menace to their own [i.e., White] position in colonial society, competing for space, place, trade, and political influence with the imperial authority" (Swanson, 1983, p. 404). Basically, there was a conflict between White and Indian capital. During the late nineteenth century, the main economic activity of Durban's

White colonists was trade. The emergence of Indian traders during the 1870s presented a threat to White economic dominance because of the Indians' more efficient operations, use of family labor, and lower profit margins (Wyley, 1986, p. 46).

The legal segregation of Indians preceded that of urban Africans by more than 30 years. In 1871 the DCC adopted a policy to create separate Indian locations. It represented the "first concerted attempt at group area segregation in Durban and one of the first in a major South African town" (Swanson, 1983, p. 405). The scheme failed because the governor refused to consent to it. White demands for the compulsory segregation of Indians in Durban continued into the 20th century.

Historical factors determined that 80% of the Indian population, which constituted only 2.5% of the total population of the Union, were concentrated in Natal (Webb, 1949, p. 1). In addition, provincial boundary restrictions prevented them from moving into other provinces.<sup>3</sup> Changing occupational patterns, particularly the shift from primary to secondary activities, resulted in half of the Indians in Natal, and 41% of the total Indian population in South Africa, living in and around Durban (Webb, 1949, p. 5).

Anti-Indian agitation and allegations of penetration into White areas in Durban dominated the 1930s and 1940s. The Indian population was increasing fairly rapidly and the demand for housing increased. After the extension of the municipal boundaries in 1932, the DCC developed thousands of acres in the newly acquired areas (including Westville, Sea View, Malvern, and Escombe, which were predominantly Indian) for modern European townships. In the process, thousands of Indians who had occupied these areas for decades were displaced. Many hundreds of Whites living in the Old Borough of Durban, which was a formerly elite area in decay, sought to dispose of their deteriorated dwellings in order to procure houses in the new townships. They found ready buyers in Indians, and it was against these acquisitions that the Whites agitated (Maharaj, 1995).

The DCC demanded statutory state intervention to curb this practice. The central state was reluctant to introduce statutory residential segregation because of international repercussions, particularly in its relations with India. As far as was possible, it preferred voluntary residential separation. This was evidenced by the establishment of the Lawrence Committee and the abortive Pretoria Agreement. These attempts by the central state were consistently thwarted by the local state of Durban, which represented White class interests.

In Durban there was a strong historical alliance between the council and the White working class. The council bureaucracy, many of whom were recruited from this group, were particularly sympathetic to White working-class interests. The alliance was at times supported by some members of the local state executive. The local state bureaucracy was concerned about the housing and land needs of the White working class, and this concern often was expressed in terms of a racist discourse. The main reason for this was that the White working class was threatened by the Indians who were competing with them in the labor and housing markets. Hence, since the turn of the century, the local state and its bureaucracy were at the forefront of calls for compulsory segregation of Indians. The racist discourse and anti-Indian sentiment consolidated a political alliance between the local state, the White elite, and the White working class (Maharaj, 1992c).

Following the Second Broome Commission Report in 1943, the government was forced to bow to pressure from the Whites in Durban, who demanded that legislative controls be imposed on the property acquisitions of Indians. In 1943 the "Pegging Act" was introduced, which basically pegged the racial pattern of land ownership for the next three years in the Durban municipal area. It was replaced by the "Ghetto Act" in 1946, which extended control over the ownership and occupation of property to Indians throughout Natal and the Transvaal by creating controlled and uncontrolled areas. Controlled areas were reserved for White ownership and occupation, and inter-racial property transactions were prohibited. In uncontrolled areas there were no restrictions on the ownership and occupation of property (Maharaj, 1995).

On May 26, 1948, the National Party (NP) came into power. The principal policy of this party was apartheid, or the separation of the different race groups in all spheres. The stage was set for the GAA.

#### THE ANTI-INDIAN BASIS OF THE GROUP AREAS ACT: CENTRAL-LOCAL CONTINUITIES

The policy of the NP towards Indians is "crucial for any consideration and analysis of the thinking behind the Group Areas Act" (Venter, 1978, p. 68). The genesis of the NP's group areas policy emerged from the Sauer Commission and the Joint Report of the Asiatic Land Laws Amendments Committee and the Land Tenure Act Amendments Committee (Joint Committees). The Joint Committees were appointed to consider "proposals for the amendment of the laws relating to the ownership and occupation of land by Asiatics" (Asiatic, 1950, para. 1). The Sauer Commission and the Joint Committees recommended the policy of repatriation of as many Indians as possible, failing which there must be compulsory racial separation (Venter, 1978). The Joint Committees recommended that the Asiatic Land Tenure Act of 1946 be "replaced by a more comprehensive measure introducing compulsory segregation of the racial groups" (Asiatic, 1950, para. 1). The GAA became law on June 24, 1950.

The DCC, as the representative of the White minority of the city, historically played a significant role in the development and promulgation of group areas legislation. There was evidence of collusion and close collaboration between the NP and the DCC with regard to the planning of the group areas legislation. One view is that the genesis of the Group Areas Bill was presented in a secret "memorandum submitted by the City Council to the Asiatic Land Laws Amendments Committee and the Land Tenure Act Amendments Committee" (*Indian Views*, June 7, 1950). This situation was corroborated by the fact that a Durban city councillor, Mr. Robinson, stated that "Durban had asked for the legislation."<sup>4</sup> Senator Brooks stated, "More than anything else, more than even the Government, the City of Durban is responsible for the GAA."<sup>5</sup> The Mayor of Durban, Percy Osborn, stated that the GAA was the "life-line whereby the European City of Durban will be saved."<sup>6</sup> According to the Natal Indian Congress (NIC),<sup>7</sup> the DCC was more anti-Indian than the NP and was responsible for motivating a series of amendments to the GAA in order to expedite the rapid impoverishment of the Indian community.<sup>8</sup>

The DCC accepted the Group Areas Bill in advance of the Parliamentary debate and sent three representatives by air to Cape Town to assure the Minister of the Interior, Dr. Dönges, of the Council's support and to "ensure that Durban gets the

protection under the Group Areas Bill that it enjoys now under the Asiatic Land Tenure Act" (*Cape Argus*, May 26, 1950). A number of suggestions to "improve" the measures embodied in the bill were advanced by the DCC and were to be discussed at the meeting (DCC Minutes, June 12, 1950). As a result of this meeting the deputy town clerk of Durban had to proceed to Cape Town for further consultations with government representatives in connection with the bill (DCC Minutes, June 12, 1950).

There were several inferrences in Parliament that the DCC was the prime motivator for the GAA. It was noted in the Senate that the bill was largely promoted by the DCC (*Hansard of Senate*, June 16, 1950, col. 5428). The Opposition contended that if the DCC had provided Indians with adequate land and amenities, there would be no need for the GAA (*Hansard of Senate*, June 14, 1950, col. 5136). The NP claimed that the GAA was a response to the calls from Durban, Pietermaritzburg, and practically the whole of Natal to act against Indian penetration and expansion (*Hansard of Senate*, June 14, 1950, col. 5139). It contended that the GAA was not new to the people of Natal, as they had requested it for the past 54 years (*Hansard of Senate*, June 14, 1950, cols. 5136-5146). Dr. Dinges stated that the DCC had publicly supported the Group Areas Bill even before they had discussed the matter with him (*Hansard of Senate*, May 31, 1950, col. 7823). Furthermore, most of the amendments to the act had been submitted by the DCC (*Hansard of Assembly*, June 8, 1950, col. 8461). Therefore, the NP concluded, South Africa, and especially Natal and Durban, would be very grateful to the government for the introduction of the GAA.

The DCC submitted a number of amendments to the GAA that were intended to facilitate racial zoning with a minimum of disturbance, ensure the provision of alternative accommodation for those who would be relocated, and protect property values (DCC Minutes, September 24, 1951). The government accepted these amendments. It became increasingly apparent that these measures provided the machinery for the DCC to accelerate the European acquisition of Indian properties in order to make Durban a White group area.

In spite of the rhetoric that the GAA would apply equally to all races, the Indian was singularly attacked in the parliamentary debate as an economic threat to the Whites by both the NP and the Opposition. This enmity was reflected in the expression of numerous anti-Indian sentiments as well as references to Indian "penetration" into White neighborhoods and the need to protect White supremacy. There was little doubt that principally Indians were going to be affected by the GAA, as it was basically an extension of the Asiatic Land Tenure Act (*Hansard of Senate*, June 14, 1950, col. 5130).

The NIC asserted that in terms of the GAA, the central and local state had the backing of the law to uproot settled Indian communities, disrupt their commercial and economic activities, and force them to the undeveloped periphery of the urban complex to start afresh. The process represented a vicious cycle, for as urban expansion occurred, Indian property would once again be expropriated for the benefit of Whites (Natal Indian Congress, 1950, p. 32). According to the NIC, there would be no opportunity for commercial or economic expansion. Indians would have to choose between becoming part of the reservoir of cheap labor or acquiescing to the NP's repatriation policy.<sup>9</sup> As a strategy to oppose the implementation of the GAA, the Indian Congress movement decided not to cooperate with the Land Tenure Advisory

Board (LTAB) and pledged not to present alternative race zoning plans for the different areas, as no just plan could emerge from an unjust law (Nateker, 1956).

However, there were divisions in Indian political ranks. The Natal Indian Organisation (NIO) was formed in 1947 as a result of a split in the NIC in 1945, when leaders who were more radical displaced the conservatives of accommodationists in the Congress. The NIO's membership consisted largely of businessmen attempting to obtain concessions from the government by "constitutional" and "legitimate" means (Johnston, 1973). Although it opposed segregation, the NIO also was against the more militant strategies of the NIC. Although the NIO was more acceptable to, and entered into dialogue with, both the central and local states, it was unable to obtain any major concessions.

### RACE ZONING IN DURBAN

Given the almost unanimous acceptance of the GAA, the DCC immediately set into motion machinery to implement the act. A Technical Sub-Committee (TSC) comprising the heads of the different municipal departments was appointed by the DCC on November 20, 1950, and it drew up detailed race zoning plans for Durban. The TSC's views on the implementation of the GAA had far-reaching implications throughout the country because neither the central state bureaucracy nor the executive had given thought to how the GAA actually would be implemented. The TSC believed that each group area must have effective boundaries and that each race group must have access to its place of employment without traversing the area of another group (Technical, 1951a, para. 20). In making these recommendations, the TSC went beyond the legal requirements of the GAA and was acting from conviction rather than compulsion.

The pattern of zoning favored by the TSC was that of locating each race group as conveniently as possible in terms of its relation to other groups and access to places of employment (Technical, 1951b, para. 267). The TSC argued that this approach would utilize, as far as possible, existing natural topographical boundaries, as well as consider, for example, the type of development that had occurred in each area and the needs of each group in terms of employment and transport (Technical, 1951b, para. 269). Planning in this context would lead to racial residential ribs or radii, extending from a central "spinal" working area (Technical, 1951b, para. 270). The TSC noted that, generally, the structure of South African towns consisted of a CBD from which industrial and minor commercial districts emanated in the form of a spine flanked by residential areas. The residential areas for different races could be divided into zones by natural or artificial boundaries. An important advantage of this plan was that it allowed for the future expansion of each racial group within its own zone. As envisaged by the TSC, this was to lead to an ideal racial zoning scheme (Fig. 1).

The first racial plan of the TSC allocated the Central Area, Lower Berea, Durban North, Riverside, Prospect Hill, and Cato Manor to Whites. The Main Line suburbs (Sea View, Hillary, and Bellair) were zoned for Indians (Fig. 2). According to the TSC plan, about 119,249 Blacks out of a total population of 145,744 would be displaced, with the future of the remainder uncertain. Indians would be evicted from the mixed neighborhoods in the Old Borough of Durban, as well as in Sydenham, Springfield, and Cato Manor, areas they established as pioneers almost a century

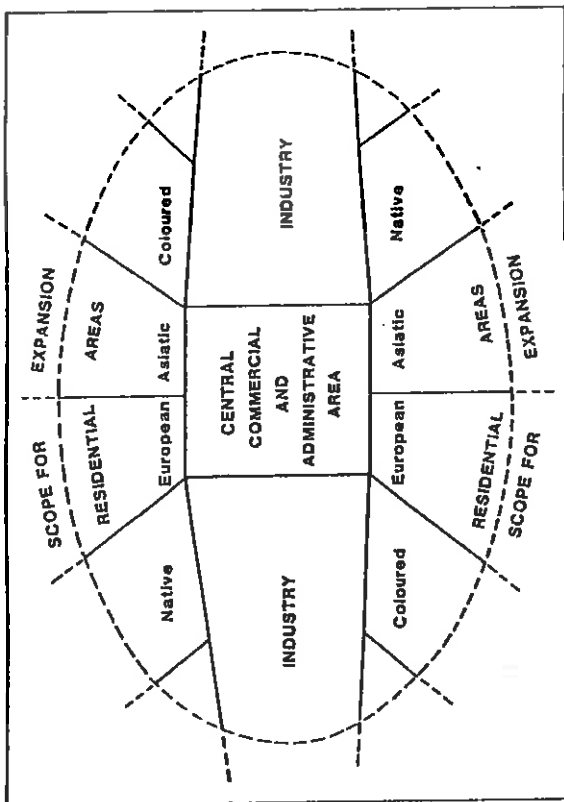


Fig. 1. The TSC's ideal race zoning plan. Source: Technical (1951b), p. 144.

earlier. In comparison, the TSC plan would require the removal of between 7,000 and 12,000 Whites (*Natal Mercury*, November 11, 1951).

Indian political and civic organizations argued that the implications of the TSC's plans were far reaching, in that the TSC envisaged the ultimate expulsion of all Indians from the city. The NIO argued that an evaluation of the TSC report revealed that its primary objective was to serve and entrench White interests in Durban by displacing settled Indian communities (*Indian Views*, November 28, 1951). The NIC contended that if the GAA could have been applied fairly, then Durban would have been divided proportionately among the different races. However, the TSC's proposals condemned Blacks to ghettos outside the city's boundaries, whereas the developed area was handed over to Whites who constituted one-third of the population (*Indian Views*, November 28, 1951). The Durban Combined Indian Ratepayers' Association (DCIRA), representing 12 organizations,<sup>10</sup> protested emphatically against the zoning plans of the TSC, maintaining that the "proposals envisage the uprooting and the ousting of the vast majority of Indian property owners, settled communities, and businesses and the breaking up of homes, and are considered to be iniquitous and unwarranted."<sup>11</sup>

#### LOCAL STATE CAPITULATION TO WHITE VOTERS

Initially the DCC accepted the TSC's plans. However, the Whites of Durban objected to the plan, particularly the zoning of the Main Line suburbs for Indians.

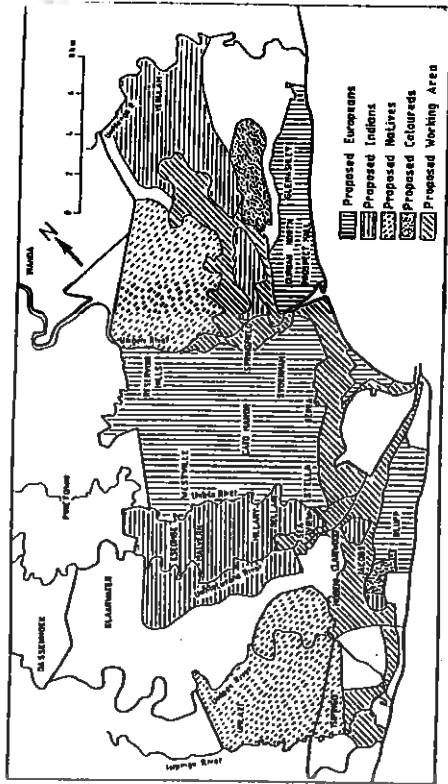


Fig. 2. The TSC's zoning proposals. Source: Technical (1951b), Map 4.

Whites generally were opposed to moving, as required by the GAA, and believed that Indians should be forced to do so. The most vociferous opposition to the TSC's proposals came from Whites in the Main Line suburbs.<sup>12</sup>

The Umhlatuzana Civic Association, representing Rossburgh, Sea View, Bellair, and Hillary, maintained that the area was one of the oldest predominantly White districts in Natal, and all legitimate means would be used to resist the TSC's recommendations.<sup>13</sup> A mass meeting convened by the Hillary District Association resolved similar opposition to the TSC's proposals because Hillary, Bellair, and Mount Vernon were predominantly European areas and there was no justification for the TSC's plan.<sup>14</sup> Although it accepted the broad principles of the report, the Durban Joint Wards Association was concerned that the TSC had not considered the possibility of an increase in the White population in Durban (Joint Wards, 1952). The strident resistance of Whites to the zoning proposals of the TSC, the NIO maintained, emphasized an important factor neglected by the Committee, "the deep-rooted attachment that human beings have for their homes and established areas."<sup>15</sup> The NIC maintained that Whites were alarmed by the slightest possibility of being displaced, yet they approved of the GAA and supported the uprooting of settled Indian communities (*Indian Views*, November 28, 1951). As a result of pressure from White voters, the DCC was forced to request that the TSC make amendments to its plans. The major change was the zoning of the Main Line suburbs for Whites (Fig. 3).

The LTA B hearings held in Durban in 1953 proved that the DCC's proposals would wreak havoc in Durban. Despite spirited objections to the Council's plans by Indian political and civic organizations, the board's recommendations to the minister revealed that it had basically accepted the DCC's plans (Horrell, 1956). Indian objections and recommendations were not considered at all. This raised questions as

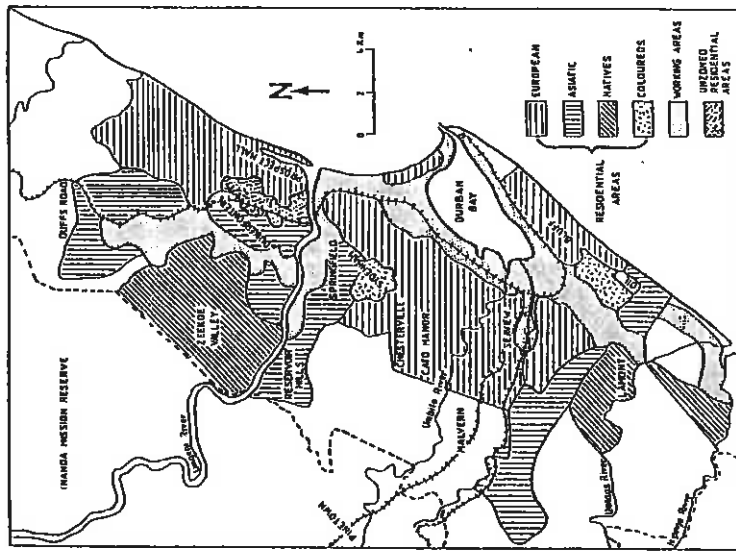


Fig. 3. The DCC's zoning plans. Source: Durban Housing Survey (1952), Map 11.

to the impartiality of the LTAB, as well as to ministerial assurances that the act would be applied fairly. The DCC's collaboration with the government resulted in the group area proclamation of June 6, 1958, in which Durban was zoned a "White" city (Fig. 4). In the process, about 75,000 Indians and 81,000 Africans would be uprooted from settled communities (*Hansard of Assembly*, August 5, 1958, col. 1472).

#### THE FAILURE OF PROTEST

The proclamations galvanized the various Indian political and civic organizations into recognizing the need for a united front in opposing the GAA. The major bodies involved in the unity move were the NIC, the NIO, and the DCIRA. In a joint statement, they urged the community to participate in mass protest action and emphasized the need for unity (*The Graphic*, June 20, 1958). Three mass protest meetings were held in Durban within three weeks of the proclamations. The call for mass protest action culminated in a rally held at the Curries Fountain ground on June

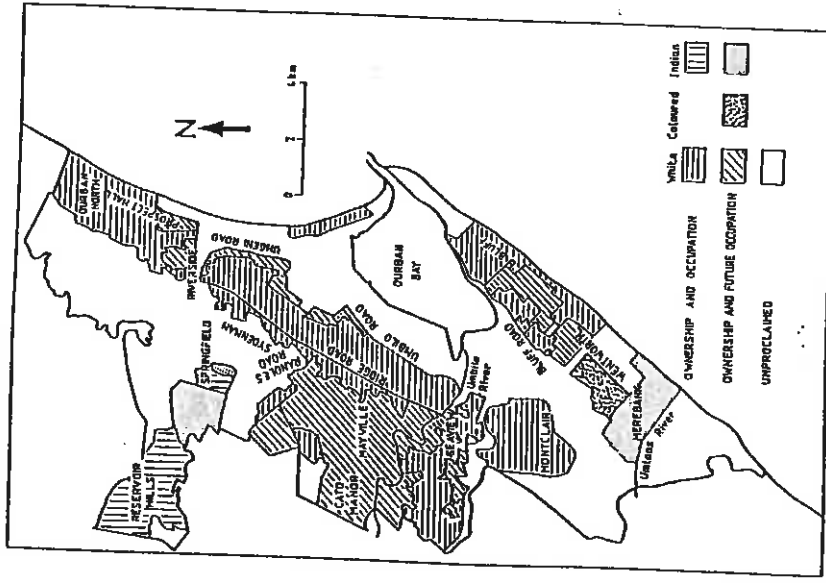


Fig. 4. The 1958 group area proclamations in Durban. Source: Prentice Hall Legal Services, Durban, South Africa.

26, 1958, convened jointly by the NIC, the NIO, and the DCIRA and attended by over 20,000 people. The mass meeting adopted the following resolutions:

1. To call upon the government "in the name of human decency and justice" to withdraw the proclamation of June 6 so that tens of thousands of people would be saved from uprooting.
2. To request the DCC to make a similar call to the government for deproclamation.
3. To appeal to all South Africans who believed in justice and human dignity to support the clamor for the repeal of the GAA.
4. To call upon the international community for moral support.

5. To urge the Indian community to be united in their opposition to the proclamations.
6. To embark on a mass petition campaign to draw the attention of Parliament to the implications of the proclamations, and to request immediate redress (*The Graphic*, July 4, 1958).

A significant feature of the protest meeting was the involvement of Europeans who also opposed the proclamations. A group of 36 prominent, concerned European citizens, including churchmen, academics, and members of parliament, signed a statement declaring that they shared the distress of those who would be uprooted by the GAA (*The Graphic*, June 27, 1958). Commenting on the meeting, *The Graphic* (July 4, 1958) stated that although "there was no challenge to authority, no resistance advocated, the meeting itself was the greatest possible challenge to the conscience of the White citizens of Durban and elsewhere."

There was an evident need to capitalize on the awareness associated with the mass mobilization following the proclamations of June 6, 1958. However, the period following the mass protest meetings of June was characterized by a general lull. Concern was expressed about the aging leadership, lack of direction, and poor organization in Indian political structures. *The Leader* (August 1, 1958) called for greater action and militancy. It maintained that "the militants [NIC] appear to have sold out to the moderates [NIO], and in the name of unity have completely forgotten their militancy."

It is pertinent to note that many in the hierarchy of the dominant body, the NIC, including its president, Dr. G.M. Naicker, were facing trial for high treason during this period, and they were preoccupied with this issue rather than the GAA. There also was a decline in the active membership of the NIC. The branches considered active by the general secretary of the NIC were reduced by more than half, from 28 in 1947 to 12 in 1959. "Lethargy" and "inactivity" appeared to characterize the attitude of most members (Johnson, 1973, pp. 125-126). The main problem experienced by the NIC was poor organization, as well as the fact that it was still dominated by an elite group, although the leadership was more radical (Johnson, 1973, p. 137). Segregation presented an immediate threat to middle- and upper-class Indians, and political action and resistance was directed toward protecting the interests of this group. For the poor, there was the possibility of being housed in municipal housing schemes and relief from the high levels of exploitation from the Indian landlords. The majority of Indians were low-income laborers who were afraid of being arrested and of the consequent loss of jobs, earnings, and family support associated with political activism. Furthermore, it was estimated that 70% of the Indians in the Durban region were living below the poverty line (Padayachee et al., 1985).

#### FISCAL REALITIES: CENTRAL-LOCAL CONFLICT

As the financial implications of the 1958 proclamations became apparent, even the chief protagonist of the GAA began to have second thoughts about the fairness and consequences of the legislation. On June 5, 1958, the DCC resolved that a "more realistic approach" be adopted to race zoning in the city, with emphasis on the "minimum disturbance of the existing population" (DCC Minutes, June 5, 1958). The

DCC was forced to review its race zoning plans because of the exorbitant cost of implementing apartheid.

The city was unwilling, and in fact could not afford, to finance the cost of resettlement. It recognized the fact that there was insufficient land within the boundaries of the city to accommodate the displaced groups, and hence the need to develop land outside the city's periphery. However, "the cost of land and services, if such a measure was to be implemented, would be of such astronomical proportions that unless the Government was prepared to finance the whole of the move itself, it was utterly beyond the capacity of the DCC" (*Hansard of Assembly*, September 10, 1958). The government itself was unable to answer the question of who would foot the bill for relocating the thousands who would be displaced. Both the central and local states were experiencing a fiscal crisis (*Daily News*, May 28, 1958).

The government's response to the DCC's decision to review its race zoning plans was that the proclamations of June 6, 1958 "corresponded almost entirely with the recommendations made by the Council" (*Hansard of Assembly*, September 10, 1958, col. 3461). The Minister of the Interior stated that in the five-year interim period between the recommendations of the Group Areas Board (GAB, which replaced the LTAB) and the proclamations, there had been no objections (from Whites, obviously) to Durban's race zoning plans (*Hansard of Assembly*, September 10, 1958, pp. 3473-3474). Dr. Dinges was adamant that the government was determined to implement its plans regardless of the views of the DCC, and he threatened to amend the law to force local authorities to cooperate.

In terms of the Draft Amendment to the Group Areas Act Development Bill of 1957, Dr. Dinges wanted the power to force local authorities to provide housing for displaced groups and to force them to acquire properties from the Development Board. He also wanted the authority to initiate housing schemes and force the municipalities to bear the costs (*The Graphic*, November 11, 1957). The central state was using its recourse to law to undermine the autonomy of local authorities.

The DCC strongly opposed the empowerment of the government to usurp the functions of local authorities and to impose financial sanctions upon them. It protested against the threat to undermine the autonomy of local authorities, as well as the attempt to force local ratepayers to bear the cost of implementing the state's policy of apartheid (*Daily News*, November 28, 1957). The DCC argued that rather than impeding the implementation of group areas legislation, the council had made every effort to make it feasible on the equitable and just basis that the government seemed to desire. It therefore would be far better for the government to cooperate with the Council with regard to the problems that it had experienced, instead of threatening it with compulsion. Furthermore, if the government was unable to finance its desired pattern of apartheid in Durban, it would have to accept the DCC's proposal of minimum disruption of existing settlements (*Daily News*, May 29, 1958).

Thus, while there was general consensus between the central and local states with regard to political and residential order in Durban, there was conflict over who would bear the costs of implementing the GAA. The alliance between the NP and the DCC was strained, and tensions between the central and local states increased markedly. The DCC went ahead with its rezoning plans, the essence of which was that Cato Manor would be zoned for Indians, to immediately, Whites in Durban protested this action.

### LOCAL STATE VACILLATION

On October 1, 1958 the composition of the DCC was drastically altered by the White electorate. Eleven of the 12 councillors standing for reelection, and all who were supporting the call for a revision of the June proclamations, lost their seats. Indians were convinced that it was the candidates' support of fairness in terms of the implementation of the GAA that had sealed their fate at the polls (*The Leader*, October 24, 1958). Mr. Percy Osborn was elected chairman of the Planning and Development Control Committee, which was directly involved in making recommendations with regard to group areas. Mr. Osborn supported the DCC's 1952 proposals and opposed the zoning of Cato Manor for Indians.<sup>17</sup> Significantly, there was strong resistance from liberal Whites who formed a Citizens' Committee to oppose Mr. Osborn's plans.

A mass meeting convened by the Citizens' Committee and attended by 2,300 Whites unanimously resolved that the removal of Indians from Cato Manor was immoral and beyond the financial capacity of the DCC (*Natal Mercury*, February 24, 1959). This resolution represented the development of a nonracial alliance that was opposed to the GAA. Commenting on the Citizens' Committee meeting, *The Graphic* (February 27, 1959) maintained that for the first time in the history of Durban, White conscience had been stirred into mass action and protest against the immoral and inequitable treatment of voiceless and voiceless Blacks.

The DCC was forced to take cognizance of this protest, and it adopted a compromise solution in which that portion of Cato Manor that was predominantly Indian owned and occupied would be zoned for this group (DCC Minutes, June 2, 1959). Numerous unsuccessful attempts were made by the DCC to influence the Minister of the Interior to accept the Cato Manor "compromise."

The central state was not impressed with developments in Durban. On February 20, 1959, Mr. Naude, the Minister of the Interior, stated in Parliament that Cato Manor had been proclaimed a group area for Whites and it would remain so (*Daily News*, February 20, 1959). The minister emphasized that the central state's version of race zoning would be implemented regardless of the views of the local state: "if we get the support of the municipality, we shall be pleased . . . but if not we shall simply carry on without it" (*Hansard of Assembly*, April 12, 1960, col. 5370).

By the end of the 1950s, both the NIC's and the NIO's opposition to the group areas took the form of rhetorical statements, with very little practical action. However, the ratepayer and civic organizations, particularly the Cato Manor Co-ordinating Council (CMCC), made spirited attempts to save Cato Manor, in spite of being berated and humiliated by the government. As a disenfranchised group, however, their views were not taken seriously by the state.<sup>18</sup> In December of 1962, the GAB held a hearing to determine whether Cato Manor should be zoned for immediate White occupation. Despite receiving more than 10,000 objections to the zoning of Cato Manor for Whites, the board merely affirmed the government's decision of June 6, 1958. The spatial impress of the central state was imposed upon the local state of Durban.

The central state was adamant that it would impose its version of race zoning upon the local state, and it had the power to force local authorities like the DCC to finance this process of massive relocation of hundreds of thousands of disenfranchised people.<sup>19</sup> Thus, by the early 1960s there was evidence of increased central state control over the local state, and the space for local opposition to central policies was

significantly reduced. The weak apartheid state of 1948 with its repressive apparatus was very much in control by the early 1960s for the following reasons:

1. The central state had officially reduced the scope of the "statutory discretion" of the local state in implementing central policies.
2. There was a re-assertion of central authority and an increase in bureaucratic pressure on the local state.
3. The political will to use the bureaucratic apparatus increased the power of the central state to exploit the fiscal vulnerability of the local state, with the latter being forced to acquiesce to the policies of the former (Adler, 1990). The NP grew increasingly powerful with each election after 1948 and could therefore afford to "get tough" with intransigent local authorities like the DCC.

### CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the role of the local state in Durban in planning for racial segregation under the terms of the GAA. Demands for restrictions on Indian acquisition and occupation of land were pursued most vigorously by the local state in Durban. The DCC, representing the White ruling class, played a major role in the development and implementation of the GAA and worked in close collaboration with the central state. Conclusive evidence has been presented in this study to support the contention that in Durban, the GAA was initially aimed primarily at Indians.

This paper has highlighted the tensions, conflicts, and contradictions in central-local state relations with regard to the implementation of the GAA in Durban. In many cases, shifts in state policies at both the central and local levels were related to changes in its power base, or were the result of political pressure from popular groups. Although there was general consensus between the central government and the local state in Durban with regard to political and residential order, there was conflict over who should bear the costs of implementing the GAA.

Finance frequently is an area of conflict between central and local states, both of which have a strong interest in restricting expenditure and consequently strive to pass the financial burdens of various policies onto different parties (Page, 1986). In order to ensure that its policies would be applied, the apartheid central state threatened to resort to legislation to reconfigure central-local relations. Thus, as suggested by Ogborn (1992, p. 219), legislation sets the "capacities, potentials and limits of central-local relations."

States are always immersed in the nebulous and arduous task of projecting power across space, and the local state is an essential element of the "territorial state apparatus" (Ogborn, 1992). In South Africa the local state has been regarded as a passive recipient of central state policies. Furthermore, apartheid was viewed as a policy of the NP-dominated central state. This was mainly because of the high level of centralization of state power and its institutional apparatus in South Africa. However, this paper has revealed that there were significant continuities between the policies of the local state in Durban in the 1940s and early 1950s and the apartheid central state. It also is evident that the local state in Durban was operating with a significant level of



autonomy. The local state not only had initiated action over compulsory residential segregation independently of higher state tiers, but also influenced the central state. To the apartheid central state, local authorities were the pawns to implement its policy of segregation. Local state responses were significantly influenced by their constituencies, a situation that led to continuities as well as conflicts between the state tiers. The Indian "problem" in Durban, for example, influenced the formation of an alliance between the ruling National Party and a local authority that was sympathetic to the United Party. Ultimately, there had to be some form of accommodation, but largely on conditions imposed by the central state.

It has been argued that the "policies and administrative practices of the state cannot be understood fully without identifying the impact of 'struggles from below'" (Posel, 1991, p. 1). This paper has drawn attention to the failure of protest and resistance by Indian political and civic organizations. In spite of strategic differences, the 1958 proclamations galvanized the various Indian political and civic bodies into recognizing the need for a united front in opposing the GAA. Thus, central state policies were actively contested in localities. However, opposition took the form of mass protest meetings and rhetorical outbursts. There was an obvious lack of effective leadership to mobilize opposition to the proclamations. In addition, the coercive apparatus of the apartheid state, as represented by the police and army, was very strong.

In this paper the influence of urban politics in restructuring space and territory has been emphasized. The planning for segregation under the terms of the GAA in Durban epitomizes the spatial dimension of urban politics in South Africa. The implementation of the GAA provides a classic example of what Cuthbert (1991, p. 578) refers to as the "manner in which space is crafted, bounded, annexed, delineated and institutionalised to serve specific economic and political intentions." The formulation and administration of the GAA reflects the structure and organization of power, as well as the capacity of different groups with varying access to power and the judiciary to oppose the implementation of the act.

The GAA, finally abolished in 1991,<sup>20</sup> represented an explicit territorial strategy to implement apartheid. In the process, millions were uprooted and relocated, and communities dismembered. South Africa now finally has embarked on the long journey toward reconstruction, development, and planning in the post-apartheid era. However, the spatial and social impact of the GAA still will be evident on the urban landscape for many years.

## NOTES

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<sup>2</sup>However, Durban also was at the forefront of calls for the segregation of Africans. See Swanson (1976), Maylam (1982), and Mesthrie (1984).

<sup>3</sup>In terms of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1905 and the Immigration Act of 1906, Indians were prohibited from entering the Transvaal and Cape Colony, respectively, without permits. They were completely barred from the Orange Free State.

<sup>4</sup>Minutes of Council-in-Committee Meeting of the DCC held with the Technical Sub-Committee on Race Zoning, August 15, 1951.

<sup>5</sup>Address by Senator Brooks to the SAIRR Council, *Daily Representative*, January 23, 1952.

<sup>6</sup>Minutes of Council-in-Committee Meeting held with the Technical Sub-Committee on Race Zoning, August 15, 1951.

<sup>7</sup>This is a political organization formed by Mahatma Gandhi in 1894.

<sup>8</sup>Speech delivered by Dr. G.M. Naicker, president of the NIC, at the opening of the Annual Conference of the NIC, September 29, 1951.

<sup>9</sup>Memorandum submitted by the NIC to the Land Tenure Advisory Board on the Proposed Proclamation of Group Areas in Durban, February 18, 1953, para. 6.

<sup>10</sup>The following Ratepayers' Associations were represented—Riverside-Briardene and District, Ward VI, Mayville, Cato Manor, Cato Manor Economic Housing Scheme, Sea Cow Lake, Briardene (Umgeni Heights), South Coast Junction Area, Umhlatuzana, Greenwood Park, Stella Hill, Malacca Road, and Ryde Place.

<sup>11</sup>Letter from the Durban Combined Indian Ratepayers' Association to the DCC, January 15, 1952.

<sup>12</sup>Agenda, Council-in-Committee meeting of the DCC, January 23, 1952.

<sup>13</sup>Letter from the Umhlatuzana Civic Association to the DCC, November 29, 1951.

<sup>14</sup>Letter from the Hillary District Association to the DCC, December 1, 1951.

<sup>15</sup>NIO memorandum to the LTAB, February 19, 1953.

<sup>16</sup>Minutes of the Planning and Development Control Committee, August 14, 1958.

<sup>17</sup>For example, see memorandum submitted by the CMCC to the Mayor of Durban, November 1960; memorandum submitted by the CMCC to the Prime Minister, Dr. H.F. Verwoerd, December 4, 1961.

<sup>18</sup>"Group Areas and the Local Authority," address delivered by Mr. P.W. Botha, Deputy Minister of the Interior, at the opening of the 14th Annual Conference of the Institute of Town Clerks of Southern Africa, April 24-27, 1960, Mossel Bay.

<sup>19</sup>For an analysis of the dynamics leading to the demise of GAA, see Maharaj and Mpungose (1994).

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## RESEARCH NOTE

MOSCOW UNDER GLOBALIZATION AND TRANSITION:  
PATHS OF ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

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**Abstract:** This paper examines modern structural shifts in Moscow in the context of national and international tendencies. It is based upon the hypothesis that one of the important characteristics of the present transitional stage of the Russian economy is the growth of the structural and qualitative gap between Moscow as a strongly dominating focus of post-industrial transformations and the rest of the country. The paper begins with a general analysis of macrostructural transformations in Russia's capital city, focusing on de-industrialization and the increasing role of producer services. This is followed by a comparison of modern trends in Moscow with those taking place in the most important world cities. In this context it is possible to evaluate the applicability of the world-city concept to transitional economies and to explore the changing role of Moscow in the international urban system.

Economic and political reforms in Eastern Europe are promoting the integration of the post-communist countries into the world economy. Structural and spatial transformations at both national and regional levels depend increasingly upon international processes. Metropolitanization of Eastern European capital cities, which are especially sensitive to reforms and innovations, is stimulating new processes, similar to those that started in the Western capital cities many years ago.

Moscow, as the capital of the Soviet state, combined features common to most world capital cities (concentration of political power, decision-making, and control functions) with traditional overemployment in manufacturing (over 30% as late as the early 1980s), including obsolete resource- and labor-intensive industries. Another important feature of Moscow in the last decades was a surprisingly high share of the quaternary sector (over 20%), especially in science (25% of all Soviet research personnel). This may be explained, in part, by the concentration of ministries and numerous governmental organizations, each of which tried to create its own internal system of services and research units. New tendencies, which appeared in early the 1990s as a result of economic and political reforms in Russia, are slowly changing the role of Moscow in both a national and international context.