

THE BATTLE FOR SOUTH END: GROUP AREAS REMOVALS IN PORT ELIZABETH IN THE 1960s

RH du Pré¹

INTRODUCTION

Since the late 1850s a vibrant cosmopolitan community developed in South End,² Port Elizabeth and a variety of communities and nationalities lived in harmony with one another, respecting one another's culture, religion and way of life. After more than a century, the government of the day decreed that people of different colours and cultures could not live together any longer. The Group Areas Act (No. 14) of 1950 set aside separate residential areas for each population group as provided for by the Population Registration Act of 1950. The Group Areas Act aimed at restricting each population group to defined places as far as ownership, occupancy and trading were concerned. The ultimate goal of the Group Areas Act, however, was to extend restrictions in order to establish residential racial purity by shifting groups from one place to another.³

In 1963 South End was declared a "white" group area. In May 1965 eviction notices were served on all "non-white" residents and property owners. By 1972 the "old" South End was no more. Within the space of a few years an entire community had been destroyed, its members dispersed to the northern areas of Port Elizabeth.

ORIGINS OF SOUTH END

South End originally consisted of four portions of land. The first portion, known as the farm Paapenbietjesfontein, was the land south of Walmer Road as far as the Shark River. The second portion of land was the section along the foreshore. The third portion of land was the section given to Captain Moreby of

1 Faculty of Arts, University of Transkei.

2 A book on South End has recently been published which is expected to spur studies of this area: RH du Pré (ed.), *South End: As we knew it* (Port Elizabeth, 1997). This is the story of South End by Yusuf Agherdien, Ambrose George and Shaheed Hendricks who were all born there.

3 RH du Pré, *Separate but unequal* (Johannesburg, 1994), p. 82.

the 1820 settlers, situated all along the south side of the Baakens River. The fourth section was the section bordering Walmer in the west. The farm Paapenbietjesfontein was allocated to Mynheer Gerhardus Oosthuizen by Governor Lord Charles Somerset on 21 October 1820. After his death his daughter, Johanna Magdalena Oosthuizen, bought the estate for 135 pounds sterling. She married a Hollander, Jacobus Andreas Roedeloff, whose name was abbreviated to Rudolph (a well-known street name in South End). Upon his death, she married William Gardner.⁴

After Johanna Gardner's death, her sons acquired the estate but were not keen to look after it. In 1859, the estate was divided into building plots.⁵ This was the first time that South End started to develop in an orderly fashion. However, very few plots were purchased or developed because the cost of building and hence renting of houses was very expensive. According to JJ Redgrave "the development of South End was very slow and even in the late 1860s there were still very few dwellings in that part of town". The dwellings which existed were of an extremely primitive architecture, which included "the wattle and daub huts and tin shanties of the Malay Fishermen dotted all along the Foreshore".⁶

Malays came to play an integral role in the development of South End, having settled in the vicinity of Port Elizabeth from the time of its founding as Fort Frederick in 1799.⁷ The main body of Malays arrived in Port Elizabeth in 1846 when a number of those who had fought for the Colonial Army against the Xhosa, decided to establish themselves in Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage after the war on the Eastern Frontier.⁸ The presence of Malays (mostly fishermen) between Main and Strand Street was established when a mosque was built in Grace Street. With the development of the central area of Port Elizabeth Malays had to move.⁹ On 7 December 1855 land south of the Baakens River (South End) was granted to the Malay community.¹⁰ Malays also bought some of the first plots which were offered for sale in 1859.¹¹ Apart from the Malays who lived in South End, other groups also moved into the area, viz. Indians,

4 Du Pré, *South End*, pp. 3-4.

5 JJ Redgrave, *Port Elizabeth in Bygone Days* (Wynberg, 1947), p. 71.

6 Redgrave, p. 72.

7 Du Pré, *South End*, p. 4.

8 JG Nel, *Die geografiese impak van die Wet op Groepgebiede en verwante wetgewing op Port Elizabeth* (MA dissertation, University of Port Elizabeth, 1987), p. 19.

9 Nel, p. 23.

10 Nel, p. 19.

11 Nel, p. 19.

Chinese,¹² Europeans, St Helenians, Portuguese, Greeks, Khoikhoi, Fingoes and Xhosa.

The mingling of the different cultural groups created a cosmopolitan South End community, characterised by a generally harmonious co-existence and cultural and religious tolerance. This multiracial, multicultural, multinational cosmopolitan society came to an abrupt end when the "old" South End was destroyed by the implementation of the Group Areas Act in the 1960s and 1970s.

THE GROUP AREAS ACT (1950)

The most devastating phenomenon to affect the residents of South End in its illustrious history was undoubtedly the Group Areas Act of 1950. This Act had as its main purpose to restrict each population group to specific places as far as ownership, occupancy and trading was concerned. As such the Act was underpinned by the Population Registration Act of 1950 which labelled and racially classified all South Africans as part of a defined population group.¹³ The ultimate goal of the Group Areas Act was to extend the restrictions which already existed for "Coloureds", "Asiatics" (Indians) and "Natives" (Africans) as well as to establish separate residential areas for different population groups by shifting people from one place to another. The segregationist aim of this Act was clearly spelt out by the National Party's Dr TE Dönges, Minister of the Interior, who guided the Bill through parliament: "We do not believe that the future of South Africa will be that of a mixed population, and this is one of the major measures designed to preserve white South Africa."¹⁴

GROUP AREAS PROCLAMATION

The proclamation of the Group Areas Act in Port Elizabeth was a very emotional and contentious issue, since the areas in and around the centre of the city were integrated communities dating back to the colonial period.¹⁵

-
- 12 See K Harris, *Accepting the group, but not the area: The South African Chinese and the Group Areas Act*. Paper presented at the South African Historical Society Conference, Pretoria (6-9 July 1997), p. 3.
 - 13 See RH du Pré, *Race classification in South Africa, 1950-1991: Application, implementation and consequences*. Paper presented at the biennial conference of the South African Historical Society, Grahamstown, July 1995.
 - 14 AJ Christopher, "Formal segregation and population distribution in Port Elizabeth", *Contree*, No. 24 (September 1988), pp. 7-8.
 - 15 See Christopher, (Figure 3 and Figure 4), p. 8.

Proclaiming these areas "white" meant that all "non-whites" living in the area had to move. The proclamation of the group areas had been anticipated by the Port Elizabeth Municipality, since all land which was available for private sale after 1949 included "racially restrictive clauses for occupation and ownership".¹⁶ These restrictions had not been previously included in the title deeds of sale.

The proclamation of the Group Areas Act evoked a storm of protest in Port Elizabeth, which took the form of letters to the local newspapers,¹⁷ protest meetings by the Anti-coloured Affairs department (Anti-CAD) movement and the formation of the Group Areas Action Committee (GAAC). The GAAC was an umbrella organisation set up to represent all the community groupings in South End who were prepared to fight against the Act. The anti-CAD had been established in opposition to the creation of the Coloured Affairs Department by the Smuts Government in 1943 which was to provide for separate administration of matters pertaining to coloured people. It saw this as the beginning of the application of segregation measures to coloured people, which had already begun to be applied to Africans.¹⁸ It is therefore not surprising that this organisation came out so strongly in opposition to the Group Areas Act.

During a protest meeting of the GAAC soon after the Group Areas Act had become law, the Anti-CAD's vice-chairman, Dennis Brutus,¹⁹ pointed out that "the Act would breed racial friction and once they were moved, there was no likelihood of any adequate compensation for homes or businesses. There was also the likelihood that non-whites would no longer be allowed to own property." They could be reduced to "leaseholders". Furthermore, he could not see any justification for the move and felt it was based on racial discrimination. It was a tool used by the Nationalist Government to sow seeds of disunity among the "non-white" communities. Lastly, the Act was going to be exploited by the government: "In highly organized, patrolled locations, freedom of thought and speech would better be controlled. Nationalist propaganda already insinuated that the non-white was an inferior being."²⁰ FA Landman,²¹ the Anti-

16 Christopher. p. 8.

17 Eastern Province Herald and Evening Post.

18 For a more detailed discussion on this issue, see Du Pré, *Separate but unequal*, pp. 59-60.

19 When police harassment eventually forced Dennis Brutus into exile he spearheaded the boycott of South African sport through SANROC (South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee). Brutus later became a professor of English in the United States.

20 Newspaper Resources, File 2/4, vols 104 (1951-8).

21 Because of his opposition to apartheid and the Group Areas Act, Landman was forced to leave South Africa in 1963 on an exit permit. He went to Zambia and later settled in England. He died in 1993 while on a visit to Port Elizabeth.

CAD's chairman, stated that "one of the most important tragedies of the Act would be the race hatred and friction it would stir up among non-Europeans". He declared that "it must be our chief consideration not to make it possible to let this race attitude develop".²²

Notwithstanding the opposition to the Act, government, municipal councillors and whites in general favoured the implementation of the Act in South End. Views were advanced that there were many brothels, shebeens and gambling dens in South End and that the police could hardly cope; the area would become congested with "non-whites" if they remained there; South End was a slum and that it was decaying because "non-whites" did not look after their homes; and if the government planned to renew the area, the "non-whites" should be removed because they would be least affected by such a move. The real fear, which was readily expressed, was that there would be an influx of "non-whites" into the area, which would constitute a threat to the way of life of whites in adjacent areas.

Most of the reasons and arguments advanced were shallow and lacking in substance and were nothing more than an attempt to justify the removal of "non-white" communities from South End. The accusation that South End was a slum was of course a gross generalisation. However, there were areas which had degenerated. On the other hand, most tenants, owners and landlords had over a period of many years built, added-on and renovated on a regular basis. Because segregation, job reservation and "white" affirmative action since the early 1900s had resulted in the income of "non-whites" being lower than that of whites, their homes were not as fashionable and smart as those housed in upmarket white areas. To such whites, the humble dwellings of "non-whites" constituted a "slum."

OPPOSITION TO REMOVALS

Each of the "groups" singled out by the government for removal to a distinct group area expressed strong opposition to moving out of South End and vigorously attacked any suggestion and proposal which outlined how and why this should be done. An example of this was the reaction to a proposal by the Reference and Planning Committee of the Group Areas Board that Chinese, Indians and Malays be moved to an area on the Cape Road beyond Westering. George Hayward, United Party MP for Port Elizabeth, vigorously opposed this

22 Newspaper Resources, file 2/4, vols 1-4 (1951-8).

suggestion, and instead suggested that the Indian, Chinese and Malay communities be allocated group areas beyond Schauder township in the direction of Bethelsdorp.²³ BB Ramjee of the Indian Community weighed in against Hayward: "Mr Hayward's proposal shows a complete disregard of the fate of the non-Europeans. He simply wants non-whites moved out and away from any area in which he may have interest, without considering for a moment how non-whites will live." HO Cassim,²⁴ president of the Moslem Movement in Port Elizabeth concurred: "We do not accept the original proposals much less this one made by Mr Hayward. The Act will strangle the Malay Community economically. Most of us are tailors. We cannot live in separate areas, making suits for one another." Wing King, chairman of the Chinese Association, declared that the Chinese were in principle opposed to group areas in which the people of a single group had to live and trade: "In a Community (South End) of 1300 Chinese, we have 248 shops. Obviously we cannot trade among ourselves."²⁵ Giving evidence before the Group Areas Board in 1956, the Chinese declared emphatically that "they opposed a group area for Chinese along Cape Road because the establishment of a Chinese group area would mean the removal of Chinese traders from their clientele, with consequential effect of depriving the members of the Chinese group of plying their trade as general dealers".²⁶ On the other hand, Hayward's sentiments concerning the siting of a "non-white" area next to Westering, drew strong support from residents of Kabega Park, Westering and Linton Grange. This issue showed the strong racial prejudice and fears of the white citizens of Port Elizabeth. Their major fear was the devaluation of their properties.

Not all whites displayed the same attitude. Many white residents of South End, who were approached to sign the petition calling for South End to be zoned for a Group Area exclusively for whites, refused to do so.²⁷ However, such cases were few and far between. In a letter to the *Evening Post* in 1955, a reader took fellow-whites to task. To him "one of the most tragic and incontestable facts is that even in a predominantly non-Nationalist city like Port Elizabeth, no European voice" (except one honourable letter writer) was raised

23 Newspaper Resources, File 2/4, vols 1-4 (1951-8).

24 Cassim played a leading role in the 1960s in the fight against the Group Areas Act. He was the representative of the Moslem community on the Group Areas Action Committee. Because of his political activities he was forced to leave South Africa on an exit permit and settled with his family in London.

25 Newspaper Resources, File 2/4, vols 1-4 (1951-8).

26 Newspaper Resources, File 2/4, vols 1-4 (1951-8). See also Harris, "Accepting the group, but not the area" for the Chinese attitude to Group Areas.

27 Newspaper Resources, File 2/4, vols 1-4 (1951-8).

to criticise "baasskap Group Areas proposals", neither did any of them suggest that those who desire to live in racial isolation should themselves make the inevitable sacrifice.²⁸ He stated that it could be rightly said that all Europeans, "by our silence, our apathy, our indifference, the supine timidity which prevents us from sticking our necks out because of the fear of officialdom, have at best passively condoned, and at worst, actively connived at a monstrous injustice perpetuated against those we are pleased to call our friends. (Our) primary aim is to perpetrate and preserve white civilization by jettisoning the morals, ideals and values which alone make it worth preserving." He pleaded with "Europeans of goodwill to speak up: (to) refuse to acquiesce in this policy of pushing non-whites around to suit white comfort and convenience, pockets and prejudice".²⁹

Of particular concern to Malays in South End was the position of their mosques under the Group Areas Act. The Chief Moslem Priest of the Cape Peninsula, Sheikh E Behardien, informed the Group Areas Board in Cape Town that when a mosque had been built and the ground dedicated to the service of God it could never be deconsecrated. The Sheikh warned the board of international complications that would eventuate, if any steps were taken to "alienate" a mosque. He further stated that a mosque could never be destroyed or the land on which it stood be used for any other purpose. He indicated that he was busy consulting Muslim leaders all over the world, and asked the Government to do the same.³⁰

The next phase of the struggle was to fight the Group Areas Board, because it represented the interests of the government of the day.

Group Areas Board

Before the implementation of the Group Areas Act in various parts of South Africa, the government appointed the Group Areas Board to conduct a public inquiry to hear evidence from local authorities for proposals for racial zoning; to make inspections *in loco*, and to call for objections.³¹ Its recommen-

28 Newspaper Resources, File 2/4, vols 1-4 (1951-8).

29 Letter to the Editor, *Evening Post*, 1955.

30 The two mosques in South End did indeed survive the Group Areas bulldozers, but the PE Municipality, deprived in later years of the opportunity to demolish the Pier Street Mosque to build a freeway to Humewood, decided to build the freeway over the mosque. The dome was removed because of its height. The ensuing outcry led to the freeway being built around the mosque but it is today still without its original dome. See Du Pré, *South End*, p. 15.

31 *Eastern Province Herald*, 11 November 1956.

dations were to be submitted to the Minister of the Interior who would make the final decision on Group Areas.³² In Port Elizabeth, the Committee of the Group Areas Board sat in 1956. Much of the evidence submitted was in favour of the implementation of the Group Areas Act, despite all its tragic ramifications. Arguments for and against indicated the wide gulf between whites and "non-whites". A certain Mr Marais, on behalf of some of the white voters in South End, stated that it was "the duty of Europeans, if they are sincere about working to help the Coloured Community, to move them from South End". He stated that twenty years earlier South End was an "attractive European area", but it had become a "horrible mixture of Europeans and Coloureds" and in thirty years it would become a slum if the situation remained as it was. He advanced a number of additional reasons why "Coloureds" should be removed from South End: (i) Their congested living conditions led to friction and crime. They had to roam the street for recreation; (ii) Europeans from Walmer and Forest Hill had to pass through the lower part of South End which was unsafe late at night; (iii) South End was far from the industries where "Coloureds" worked; (iv) There was heavy bus traffic through South End because Coloured workers from Salisbury park and Fairview had to pass through on their way to the North; (v) Sailors from visiting ships had to pass through South End to the Seaman's Institute. The present mixed nature of the area led to brothels, shebeens and other houses of vice.³³

Rev RD Seagar of the Anglican Church contested Marais' argument. As a parish priest in South End, he was of the view that white and coloured people lived quite contentedly together in the same neighbourhood. He dismissed Marais' assertion that South End had been a white area up to twenty years ago. The baptismal records of his church dating back to 1876 indicated that South End had always been a mixed area. Furthermore, there were only three businesses belonging to Europeans in the area. On the matter of the "unsafe" nature of South End, Seagar conceded that it would be utter folly to say no crime or hooliganism existed, but it could be controlled by "good and continual" police supervision. He objected to the notion that he as a European had the right to move anyone, and he rejected the idea that he had any moral obligation to remove coloured people from their homes.³⁴

32 Du Pré, *Separate but unequal*, pp. 82-93.

33 *Eastern Province Herald*, 11 November 1956.

34 *Eastern Province Herald*, 11 November 1956.

Throughout the entire Group Areas debate, the Port Elizabeth City Council presented an ambivalent facade: publicly it appeared to be reluctant to accept segregated residential areas, yet privately, eagerly co-operated with the Department of Community Development in its plans to implement residential segregation. With regards to South End the Council suggested that, while non-whites remained in South End, the lower section be set aside for "Coloureds" (this included Malays). It was also considered that both sides of the lower section of Walmer Road should be a free trading area.³⁵ This highlighted the difference between the Council's Group Areas proposals and that of the Government regarding the division of the "Coloured" people. The City Council had not planned separate areas for "Coloured" people and Malays. It had also not separated the Indian and Chinese Communities from each other. However, the Council agreed to the implementation of Group Areas in South End.³⁶

Towards the end of its sitting, the Group Areas Board became embroiled in a court action. On 27 November 1956, the legal team of GAAC walked out of the proceedings of the Group Areas Board. The point of contention was whether the Board had obtained prior information concerning proposed racial zones from the City Council, without making it available to the rest. If this was so, the feeling was that trust in the inquiry had been broken and the hearing had to be declared null and void. The chairman refused to accept the matter as reason enough to stop the hearing. He was then requested to recuse himself and co-members from the hearing but refused to accede to this request.³⁷ BB Ramjee took the matter to the Supreme Court. Described as "an Indian living at 28 Nelson Street, South End", he was refused an application for an interim order restraining the Committee of the Group Areas Board from making recommendations to the Minister of the Interior for Group Areas in the Port Elizabeth Municipality.³⁸ Ramjee then requested the Court to rule the respondents to have been constituted irregularly; to declare that the Chairman should have recused himself and that the proceedings should have been declared null and void. He felt that the Committee should have been restrained from submitting a report of the inquiry to the Minister of the Interior or the Group Areas Board. The judge ruled against Ramjee's submissions and ordered him to pay the costs of his application.³⁹

35 *Eastern Province Herald*, 27 November 1956.

36 *Eastern Province Herald*, 29 November 1956.

37 *Eastern Province Herald*, 27 November 1956.

38 *Evening Post*, 22 January 1957.

39 *Evening Post*, 22 January 1957.

So determined was Ramjee about the matter that he appealed to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. This appeal too failed.⁴⁰

THE END FOR SOUTH END

The final blow in the battle for the right to retain South End as a non-racial suburb was headlined in the **Eastern Province Herald** on 1 May 1965: "Port Elizabeth's 125-year old South End will be rebuilt. A far reaching scheme announced by the Government last night will entail moving 8 742 people of all races to other areas in the city, demolishing hundreds of slum dwellings, rebuilding streets and designing new developments."⁴¹ In his announcement the Minister of Community Development, PW Botha, described South End as a depressed area in one of the major harbour cities. He further stated that the whole area would be given over to urban development, which meant that most of it would be razed and rebuilt. As a consequence all the properties required for the "new" South End would be expropriated. While whites would be virtually unaffected, all coloured people were to be moved to Bethelsdorp and Gelvandale, Indians to Woolhope (later named Malabar) and Chinese to an area in the vicinity of Kabega Park.⁴² After the program of urban renewal had been completed, only whites would be allowed back into the area. This fact clearly indicates that the "slum clearance" argument was merely a very transparent excuse for what was really the opportunity to enforce racial segregation. This despite strong opposition by local residents. As an editorial on 3 May 1965 in the **Eastern Province Herald** put it: "South End was proclaimed for whites against all the wishes of the City Council ... In spite of strong pleas on behalf of the six thousand non-whites living and doing business in the area, they were ordered to move - in time."⁴³

Expropriation and eviction

On 10 May 1965 the first people in South End received expropriation

40 For his stand against the Group Areas Act and apartheid, Ramjee was banned in 1964 for five years and placed under house arrest. He passed away on 7 October 1977.

41 **Eastern Province Herald**, 1 May 1965.

42 These areas were as yet undeveloped and a great distance from South End.

43 **Eastern Province Herald**, 30 May 1965. Official figures which were released in March 1962 indicate that 539 properties in South End were owned by "non-whites", of which 398 were occupied by "coloured people" and 141 by a mixture of races. Population figures which were released at the same time indicate that there were 4 950 Malays and coloureds, 1 255 Indians, 155 Chinese, giving a total of 6 350 "non-whites." See **Eastern Province Herald**, 1 May 1965.

notices from the Group Areas Development Board. With it came a threat that the Board had the discretion that "after not less than three months" they would take possession of their properties if their hapless owners and occupants did not respond accordingly. In a letter to the *Evening Post*, a resident, Peggy Prosamy, expressed a feeling common to many facing the dreaded prospect of having to give up family homes: "In all our Non-European groups, houses were purchased by our parents after decades of sacrifice. They wanted to ensure that after they had passed we would be able to live in our own house." She explained that when the title deeds were received they were accompanied by the parental words: "No one can take away this roof which I have provided."⁴⁴ However, when expropriation became a reality, those who were still waiting for alternative accommodation were allowed to remain in their old homes, but pay a rental of 5 % of the value they received for their houses. This was a financial blow to many families who owned their paid-up homes. Now, the pittance they were to receive in compensation for the expropriation would begin to be eroded in rentals for their own houses. Whatever was left, if any, would later have to be used to purchase another house (which was unlikely as the compensation in most cases was a fraction of what was needed to purchase another dwelling) or a piece of ground on which to build a house. This meant that they would have to apply for a mortgage bond and start paying for a house all over again. For many, this was the beginning of a cycle of poverty and a life of struggle. Repossession of purchases; surrendering of insurance policies; and the removal of children from university were not unusual.⁴⁵

As the disquiet and dissatisfaction of non-white residents of South End began to grow, the rumbles of discontent reached Parliament. Helen Suzman of the Progressive Party vigorously attacked the National Party. She said that the people of South End were unhappy to leave their homes, the home of their ancestors. She could not understand why it was necessary to move whole communities for ideological reasons. They did not want to move, they had to move because the Afrikaner people wanted to have that part of Port Elizabeth in spite of the fact that it had been occupied by the coloured and Malay communities for almost a century.⁴⁶ JA Nel, MP for Port Elizabeth North, argued that the people of Port Elizabeth had asked for, and the Minister had agreed to remove "this bad patch" in the city. Suzman retorted that the people were prepared to accept slum clearance but to them "there is a considerable

44 *Evening Post*, 19 May 1965.

45 *Evening Post*, 27 May 1965.

46 *Evening Post*, 3 June 1965.

difference between the clearance of slum areas, removing the excess number of inhabitants, improving houses and condemning others, while on the other hand moving an entire community".⁴⁷

The long-awaited eviction orders, when it eventually came, wreaked havoc in the community and were the cause of great uncertainty and widespread anxiety. The uncertainty and worry went on for many years as people waited for the dreaded day to arrive. Meanwhile many became sick with worry as countless questions gnawed away at the mind: What price would they get for their homes? Would they be compensated for the land only and not the house? If so, they would not be able to afford to buy property in the new group areas, and therefore not even have enough to build a house.⁴⁸ They would then have to rent houses of a much smaller size than their original houses. Having lived for generations in their own homes, how would they cope in terms of rent money, space and environment, away from their churches, mosques, schools, sport fields and clubs. In addition, friendships of long years standing would be broken.⁴⁹

As the people sat down to wait, for what was for many something akin to an execution day, they became obsessed about the impending removals, and for many of the older people the eviction notice was a death notice. Many of the elderly people died of a broken heart before the bulldozers and trucks arrived.

When the day came for people to move, they moved. After years of discussion, protest, letters and petitions, the government got its way and the people moved. When the last "non-white" family had left; when the laughter and cries of the children had slowly died; when the excited gossip had trickled to a halt; when the calls of the fishermen and other hawkers were finally silent - the bulldozers moved in and levelled the area. Within a short time, houses, shops, schools, churches and various businesses disappeared. The life went out of the old South End.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Group Areas Act in South End resulted in the fragmentation and uprooting of a settled community and its dispersal in the

47 Eastern Province Herald, 3 June 1965.

48 Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, p. 85.

49 Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, p. 87.

ingenious way of social engineers: first by population group and then by class. In the "coloured" group area the lower income group was settled in Salt Lake and Helenvale; the higher income group in areas like West End, Springdale, Gelvandale and Salsonville; and the upper income, middle-class group in Gelvan Park and Parkside where they bought ground and built their own homes. Indians were moved to Woolhope (Malabar) where the upper-income group built luxury mansions amongst the more modest homes of the majority. Chinese went to Kabega Park and the handful of Africans were relocated in Walmer Location. Thus, while Group Areas removals attempted to consolidate racial groupings, the implementation thereof devastated the affected communities. Churches, schools and sports clubs had to close. Congregants, students and members were scattered all over Port Elizabeth. Friendships of many years standing between families and friends were broken up.

The Land Act (No. 200) of 1993 made it possible for former residents to reclaim their property, or seek compensation for unfair prices paid at the time of expropriation. In 1994 PELCRA (Port Elizabeth Land and Compensation Restoration Association) was formed to mobilise claimants and co-ordinate and assist with claims.⁵⁰ However, after the last inhabitants had been evicted, the area was developed in great haste so that today there is hardly an original building left, hardly an open stand available. There is consequently little left for former residents to reclaim. Nevertheless, for justice to prevail, provision should be made to compensate them, and the close on four million other South Africans who were dispossessed and unfairly compensated under the Group Areas Act. Whether this of course can indeed be done, is a moot point, but to not attempt such restitution will only delay the eradication of bitterness caused by the application of "the Act".

50 The Land Act and PELCRA have renewed interest in the suburb South End. A surge of interest in South End was already evident in the 1980s. See J du Plessis, "The hill of history", *Weekend Argus*, 7 May 1983; J Michaels, "The last days of South End"; E Oliver, "South End as I knew it", *Weekend Post*, 18 July 1987; L van Wyk, "Golden days in old South End", *Family Post*, 25 July 1987.