

This and report no.9 are intended to bring information contained in previous reports up to date.

I 'BLACK SPOTS'

In July 1980, the very month that Dr Koornhof declared that there would be no more forced removals, a black landowner who was appealing against the unilateral expropriation of his farm by the state, received the following letter from the Secretary for the Interior:

"You are aware of the fact that the farm constitutes a Black spot, ie an isolated portion of farm land owned by Blacks in the white area of In accordance with government policy Mr and other landowners cannot remain at"

There are still an estimated 140 to 150 of these areas in Natal - and, as the above quotation makes clear, the government plans to eliminate them as quickly (but as expediently) as possible. Rumour has it that it has set 1985 as the final date for the completion of this process. Landowners owning more than 17 ha of land qualify for compensatory Trust land; smaller landowners and tenants, the bulk of the population, get only a residential site in a 'closer settlement' dumping ground.

We have thus far a record of 39 of these threatened areas. Details on 4 of them follow.

1) KWAPITELA: (See report no.5, Oct.1980) To date the people have not been moved, although toilets and roads are being built in readiness for them in Compensation, their prospective resettlement site. (See Report no.6, Oct.1980) In late 1980 residents held several meetings to discuss their position. Speaker after speaker made the same point - they did not want to move but they feared that if they opposed the government's plan to resettle them, they would be victimised. Fear, apathy and a lack of unity between landlords and tenants undermine organisation. Nevertheless, a small group informed the magistrate on the 6th December that they did not want to move and that they needed an opportunity to discuss the matter when the whole community was at home, over the Christmas holiday. As they understand it, the magistrate has accepted their request.

2) MATIWANE'S KOP: This is a very large farm - 8225 acres and in the region of 10 000 people - 25km from Ladysmith. It was originally bought by a group of 120 Shabalala people in the 1870s. From late 1978 officials numbered people's houses as a preliminary to moving them to a resettlement site in an arid, strife-torn area beyond Ezakheni. The community is adamant that they will not move and thus far they have successfully thwarted all attempts by the local magistrate to persuade them otherwise. They have sent a memorandum to Dr Koornhof, outlining their objections, and appealed to Ulundi for support. On the 29th December 1980 they organised a meeting attended by representatives from other threatened 'black spots' in the area. Dr Mdlalose, KwaZulu Minister of the Interior, was present and publicly committed himself to support for their stand. Morale is high - "They will have to bring guns to push us out or bury us here", a spokesman has commented. (The Natal Witness, 22/11/80)

3) TEMBALIHLE: This is officially known as a 'badly situated area' - it is freehold land that was declared "released land" (for eventual incorporation into KwaZulu), but no longer qualifies in terms of the latest consolidation plans. It is a relatively small farm in the Estcourt district, with perhaps 100 households living on it. In the last 10 years there has been a large influx of new tenants, mainly ex-labour tenants who have been pushed off neighbouring white farms and have nowhere else to go.

This has severely strained already thin resources - much of what used to be common grazing land has been cut up into residential plots. The community argues that the solution is not to drive them into a closer settlement somewhere else, but allow them the right to buy or rent land where they have always lived. In November 1980 they informed the local magistrate that they did not want to move. Back came the reply that "in terms of policy" they are to be moved anyway.

4) UMBULWANE: (See Report no.7, Dec.1980) Unlike the other places described, this is black freehold land that falls under a municipality, Ladysmith. There have been no further demolitions since our last report and publicity appears to have won the community a temporary reprieve. They are experiencing other forms of harrassment, however - committee members have had several visits from the local Special Branch while the Ladysmith Labour bureau is apparently refusing to register workseekers and school-leavers who come from Umbulwane. The Ladysmith Town Clerk has also refused a request from the Umbulwane Committee that their area be provided with services, "because the area was not zoned for residential purposes". (Natal Witness, 13/12/80) This despite the fact that the landowners pay rates and people have been living at Umbulwane at least since the early years of the century. To date there has been no official response to the memorandum the community sent to Dr Koornhof apart from acknowledgement that it has been received by the Department of Cooperation and that "the matter is receiving attention". The acknowledgement comes from the Deputy Minister - the memorandum was in fact addressed to the Minister himself. In the meantime there is an uneasy calm in the community.

II RESETTLEMENT OF URBAN TOWNSHIPS

Government policy calls for urban townships within 26km of a homeland boundary to be shifted into that homeland territory. This has already happened to the townships of Estcourt (moved to Wembesi 10km away), Newcastle (moved to Madadeni 13km and Osisweni 26km away) and several of the South Coast towns round Port Shepstone (moved to Gamalakhe, about 15km from Port Shepstone). In 1971 the then Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration announced that the Government regarded up to 113km as a reasonable distance for workers to commute every day. (The Star, 19/5/71)

There has been a lull in this kind of resettlement in Natal recently, partly, it seems, because of opposition from within both the Drakensberg Administration Board and several of the white municipalities who would be affected. Townships whose fate is still in the balance include Bekhuzulu, Vryheid; Sibongile, Dundee; Tembalihle, Glencoe; Bruntville, Mooi River; Inkanyezi, Colenso and Enhlalakahle, Greytown, as well as the 2 Durban townships of ~~umiaz~~ and Chesterville. The Department of Cooperation and Development has refused to commit itself to a definite timetable for the moves. "The whole matter is still under investigation and no decision has been taken yet", a spokesman told a Daily News reporter in October 1980. (Daily News, 16/10/80) However, building is under way at at least 2 of the envisaged resettlement sites. At Mondlo, 28km from Vryheid, 1 500 stands have been earmarked for Bekhuzulu residents, while at Nqutu, 50km from Dundee, 2 000 sites are being developed for the people from Dundee and Glencoe.

Several of these communities, most notably Bekhuzulu, Sibongile and Tembalihle, have been trying to organise resistance to their proposed removal, along the lines of memoranda and deputations to the authorities. The long wait and uncertainty is having a demoralising effect on community organisation, however. Several residents have said they would rather move than continue to wait in the present limbo; some have apparently already moved away in search of security. At the same time, properties are being neglected and the townships falling into a more and more serious state of decay. There have been no official building programmes because of the prospect of removals and existing housing is desperately overcrowded. "The government is forcing our hand by not developing Bekhuzulu", a community leader has commented bitterly. (Daily News, 16/10/80)

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