

# Kei Road farmers sabotaged meeting claims priest

Daily Dispatch Reporter

EAST LONDON — The meeting between the Kei Road Farmers' Association, a Kei Road farmer and an Anglican priest, was "sabotaged" by the farmers themselves as they had not allowed two black farm worker representatives to attend.

This was said yesterday by the assistant Anglican priest of Stutterheim, the Reverend Martin Glover, in response to accusations made by the association that he and Mr Tony Goodyer, the farmer currently accommodating the 36 evicted farm dwellers, had not "had the courage" to attend the meeting called to resolve the plight of the evicted workers.

Mr Glover said that following a conversation he had had with Mr Pat Rogers, the DP candidate for King William's Town in the last election, he had "welcomed" the opportunity to meet with the farmers.

"I told Mr Rogers I would love to talk anytime with any group on the condition that farm worker representatives be present," he said.

He said it was no longer the "pattern" in South Africa for "white groups to talk about what should happen to blacks without them being present" and he believed this principle should also apply at a local level.

Mr Rogers understood and supported his point, he said.

Following considerable debate between the farmers as to whether a general or executive meeting of the association should be called, he and Mr Goodyer were subsequently informed that the farmers had requested a general meeting and that black representatives Mr Alson Tshangela and Mr Fashion Somsorha would not be allowed to attend.

He said that it was "a joke" that he and Mr Goodyer had been referred to as cowards because the people who knew of their reasons for not attending the meeting — Mr Rogers, Mr Michael John van der Vyver and Mr L. Ranger — had not explained it to the meeting.

He said he had informed Mr Ranger of their decision not to attend at 6.30 am on the day of the meeting.

Describing the situation as a "communication gap", Mr Rogers said it was decided that the meeting "by its nature" would not be a place to discuss the workers' issues, and he understood that Mr Goodyer accepted this point of view.