

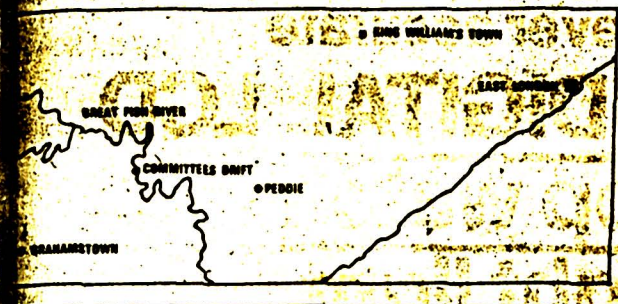
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Glenmore
to go ahead

Gtn: 200 houses



Committees Drift go-ahead



EAST LONDON — The Government is going ahead with the controversial Committees Drift-Glenmore scheme to resettle black people from Grahamstown in the Ciskei.

It is to press ahead with the scheme in spite of opposition from the Ciskei Cabinet. Just over a week ago, the homeland's Chief Minister, Chief Lennox Sebe, said publicly that his Government had won the battle against the scheme.

But in a letter to the Town Clerk of Grahamstown, the Administrative Secretary of the Ministry of Bantu Administration and Development has confirmed the Government is to continue with the plan.

An amount of R795 000 has been budgetted by the South African Bantu Trust for the 1977-8 financial year for development at Glenmore.

"In view of the fact that Grahamstown is less than 50 km away from the Ciskei, policy dictates that Bantu families residing there should eventually move to the homeland concerned.

"It is expected that development at Glenmore will commence during the financial year 1977/78. An amount of R795 000 is available on the estimates of the South African Bantu Trust for this purpose," the Administrative Secretary wrote in the letter which is dated 13 October 1977.

The Government has

also turned down an offer by the Grahamstown City Council to make more land available for black housing in the city.

The letter, which was written on the direction of the Deputy Minister of Bantu Affairs, Mr Willem Cruywagen, said the Council's offer was sincerely appreciated "but, as pointed out during the discussion at Grahamstown in December 1976, the relevant offer cannot be considered until such time as the Glenmore-Makanas Kop scheme has been established and the Government is able to determine the actual housing need in Grahamstown."

The Government has also confirmed that provision of 200 houses in Grahamstown has been approved, but said that "these houses will, however, be available only to property owners displaced from Fingo Village".

With an estimated 6 000 people living in Fingo Village at present, it is clear that the new housing scheme will only be able to accommodate a small proportion of these people and it appears the Government is planning to settle them on the old Glenmore farm which is on the

Ciskei border.

Last week, Chief Sebe said: "As far as we were concerned we fought the removal of people to this terrible place. We won the matter because the Republican Government dropped the issue."

He also said that before anyone could be settled there, a railway line would have to be constructed between Grahamstown and King William's Town and the Fish River Valley would have to be developed agriculturally. "Work will have to be available in that valley. Otherwise we will be making the mistakes of the past, like at Dimbaza. If people are just settled there, what are they going to live on? Houses and streets do not cater for the real needs of the people. They must have food and work," Chief Sebe said.

However, although the Ciskei Government has launched a bold pilot irrigation scheme at Tyefu further down the valley, its plans for further agricultural development at Glenmore and elsewhere cannot proceed because it cannot get water from the Orange River Scheme at this stage nor does it have the money to construct a canal if this water were

available. The Fish River itself is unsuitable for irrigation because it is too salinated.

Agriculture is the only form of employment possible in the remote, desolate area which has no chance of ever attracting industry unless by chance some mineral is discovered there.

Earlier this year, it appeared that the Government had reversed its policy to remove blacks from Grahamstown, after the sitting MP for Albany, Mr Bill Deacon, who has been trying to get policy reversed for 12 years, told the House of Assembly that "no person who is employed in Grahamstown will be forced to move from Grahamstown".

Mr Deacon also said: "To say that all these people will be removed to Committees and Glenmore is totally wrong because that is not the situation."

After Mr Deacon's speech, Mr Cruywagen confirmed the accuracy of these statements after being approached.

It now appears that Government policy is that blacks will be moved to Committees Drift and Glenmore, which are adjacent although Committees Drift is just inside the Republic, because the policy is that black families residing in Grahamstown will "eventually move to the homeland". — PC

(News by B. Streek, 33 Caxton Street, East London.)