



AFRA

ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL ADVANCEMENT

NEWSLETTER 7 (June 1990)

NATAL RURAL FREEHOLD COMMUNITIES REPRIEVAL CAMPAIGN, 3/4th JUNE 1990

Introduction

On the 3rd and 4th June 1990, representatives of six Natal Black freehold rural communities - Matiwane's Kop, Steincoalspruit, Cornfields, Roosboom and the Stoffelton and Stepmore complex - gathered in Pietermaritzburg to launch a campaign for their reprieve.

The communities which participated in this campaign are part of a large number of Black rural communities in Natal that have been under threat of forced removal for the past forty years in terms of the government's Apartheid land policy. They came to be known in official government terminology as 'black spots' - black freehold land that was acquired before the 1913 Land Act and which fell within areas designated by the government as "white" rural areas.

The history of these communities goes back to the 19th and early 20th centuries when numbers of black Christian syndicates bought up farms under freehold tenure. The 1913 and 1936 Land Acts designated 'scheduled' and 'released' areas for black settlement (a mere 13% of South Africa) and thus ended Black purchase of land outside the homelands.

From 1948, the Nationalist government attempted to move these freehold areas to give effect to the racial segregation of rural land. By 1982 it is estimated that 103 freehold areas representing 105 000 people were forcefully relocated. In the 1980s, plans to remove the freehold communities continued through the

government's policy of bantustan development and the consolidation of KwaZulu.

Removals were effected in terms of Section 5 of the Black Administration Act. This was accompanied by land expropriations, threats, intimidation, tactics which divided sections of the community against each other, and other forceful strategies.

In early 1985 under immense pressure from these communities as well as national and international solidarity and action, the government was forced to announce a 'suspension' of its policy of forced removals. The suspension left an estimated 180 areas in Natal (about 160 000 people) uncertain of government plans for their future and whether they would still be moved.

The continuing commitment to moving 'black spots' and implementing Apartheid policy has been evident in two new tactics which have emerged since 1985; one is the incorporation of these communities into the bantustans by redrawing boundaries by proclamation, and the other is continuing to deprive these areas of all infrastructural and technical development. The latter is accompanied by frequent visits by officials pointing out the merits of the community 'voluntarily' moving to relocation areas where development resources will be made available.

Since 2nd February 1990, there have been a number of government statements which have significance for the rural freehold areas. Firstly, in his budget vote, the

State President announced that the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts were to be revised.

Then on May 15th, the Minister of Development Aid said in Parliament that the government accepted that independence was no longer considered a worthwhile option for the self-governing territories (i.e. the homelands which have not so far accepted 'independence', such as KwaZulu), and that their constitutional future in a new South Africa was a matter for negotiation.

The Minister also said that any land occupied by communities will not be incorporated in the self-governing territories without the agreement of the lawful inhabitants.

In addition, on 22nd May, the Departments of Agricultural Development and of Development Aid issued a brief press release claiming that no expropriated African rural land would be sold.

Collectively, these announcements are signs that the government is rethinking its basic apartheid land policies. But their precise meaning for Natal rural freehold communities is not yet absolutely clear, as they are all merely general statements of intent. They imply that the racial division of land is to be altered, that the homelands policy is unviable and that plans to forcibly incorporate African rural freeholders into separate ethnic 'independent' homelands will be dropped, that the continued existence of Black rural communities which have not so far been removed is assured, and that expropriated land will not be sold to whites. But until unambiguous policy statements have been announced and gazetted, the full implications of these statements remain unclear. In the meantime, Black rural people remain in a state of insecurity.

There must be a clear indication from the government that these areas will definitely not be moved, that they will cease placing various pressures on them to move, and that they will be given assistance to develop and progress. The land belonging to Matiwane's Kop, Steincoalspruit and Roosboom, which was expropriated by the South African Government many years ago, has still not been restored to the rightful owners.

In terms of the desperate need for a broader programme of rural reconstruction in a new South Africa, the socio-economic development of these communities must be given priority. Until the 1890s, the Black communities on freehold farms were a flourishing peasantry, using modern agricultural

technology and producing for the market. However through a deliberate programme of underdevelopment by successive colonial governments, and post-union segregation and the apartheid governments, these communities have been deprived of credit, extension services, clean water, roads, schools and other social services. This has led to a situation of extreme impoverishment.

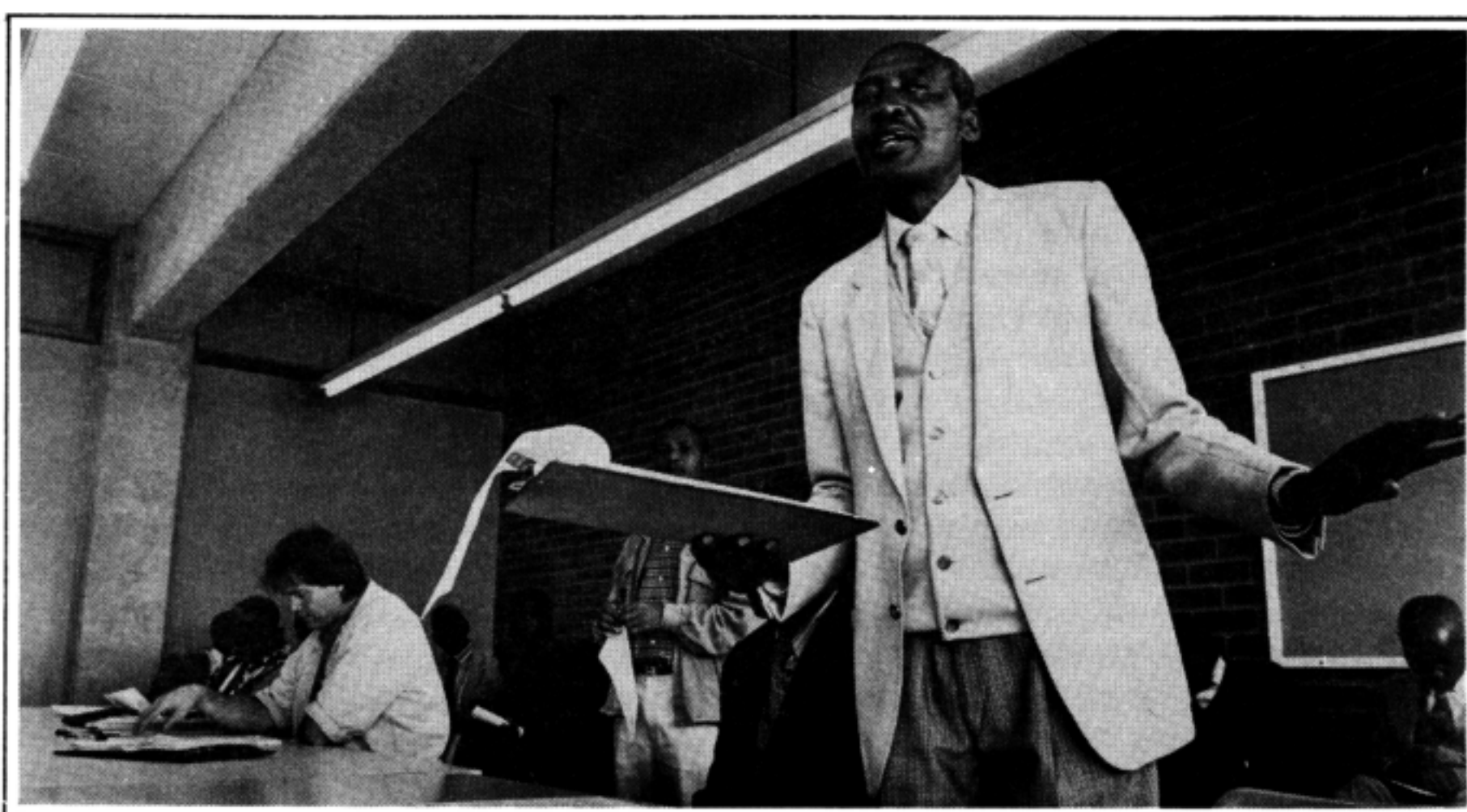
Over the years these communities have faced increasing population pressure. This has resulted from factors over which the landowners had no control: the influx of tenants who had nowhere to go following massive eviction of labour tenants from white farms, influx control which prevented urbanisation, and the Land Acts which prevent purchase of land outside the bantustans.

They have also faced a silent and debilitating war of attrition by the government. Continued insecurity, systematic government neglect, and a perpetuation of the cycle of poverty and overcrowding has led to considerable demoralisation.

Yet their deep attachment to their land and their history has seen many of them survive. Those who did not, have been consigned to a life of even greater suffering in arid closer resettlement camps within and adjoining the bantustans. If the government is serious about redressing the injustices of the past, an urgent programme of affirmative action must be instituted to support these communities in overcoming the ravages of Apartheid.

In an attempt to persuade the government to take immediate action towards meeting these needs, six rural communities decided on a publicity campaign. On the 3rd June, the community representatives met to draw up a Memorandum which was to be presented to the Department of Development Aid. On the 4th June, they briefed foreign diplomatic representatives and members of the churches. This was followed by a press conference, and a delegation to the local offices of the Department of Development Aid to present the Memorandum, a copy of which appears in this publication.

This Newsletter is designed to publicise more widely the plight of Natal's rural freehold communities, their determination to remain on their land and to regain secure freehold title where this has been expropriated, and to indicate what they are demanding from the government as restitution for past injustices. **



Mr Cyril Molefe of the Stoffelton and Stepmore complex of freehold areas addresses the press at the Natal Rural Freehold Communities Reprieval Campaign on 4 June 1990. Photo: Rafs Mayet

MATIWANE'S KOP

Matiwane's Kop is a 3 300 hectare black freehold area, with a population of about 15 000, which from the late 1940s has been under threat of removal. In 1978 the state announced that the community would be moved within a year. In 1980 the government expropriated the land. A spokesperson for the residents said in 1980:

'We will not move. We intend to carry on as we always have done. They will have to bring guns to push us out or bury us here'.

Matiwane's Kop lies about 25km north of Ladysmith and is surrounded by white-owned farms.

The farm was bought between 1870 and 1880 by a syndicate of 120 members of the Shabalala tribe, but in 1914/15 title was transferred, the land was subdivided and title vested in individuals. Thus the community's links to Matiwane's Kop are deep.

From the start, the community responded vigorously to the threat of removal. In 1979, they sent a detailed memorandum to the Minister of Co-operation and Development setting out their history and development, and their desire and determination not to be moved. Officials however came and numbered the houses, a familiar signal that removal is to take place.

The state tried various tactics to force them to move, including claiming that their chief had agreed to the removal in 1974 and that KwaZulu supported this plan. Both claims were later disproved. Then in 1980, and unbeknown to the landowners, the

state expropriated the land. There are doubts about the legality of this expropriation, and it has never been accepted by the community. In 1988, lawyers representing the community prepared an approach to the Minister to have the expropriation revoked. At this point the KwaZulu government claimed that it was handling the problem, and it is not known what further action has been taken.

In the early 1980s the Minister replied to questions in Parliament on 3 occasions confirming that Matiwane's Kop was to be removed to the Ladysmith area, but agreeing that the community had refused to move. The community have continued to voice their absolute refusal to move, and have successfully warded off any such attempts.

A survey of the area by the Surplus People Project in 1980/81 found that, like most of the freehold black areas in Natal, Matiwane's Kop had suffered from a huge influx of tenants, and had been deprived of development by the state. The result is that it is overcrowded, badly eroded and poor. But although Matiwane's Kop suffers from gross underdevelopment, the S.P.P. survey claimed that **'The overall picture to emerge ... is of a community which is poor by urban standards but nevertheless economically viable, having a valuable subsistence agriculture base, and socially cohesive.'** (Surplus People Project, v.4, p.453) Of 85 households, 36 said they had been there for 40 years, and over half said they had been there for more than 20 years.

Local facilities, though basic, have been built and financed by the residents, and include a secondary

school, 4 primary schools, 10 church buildings and 12 shops. The community is dedicated to improving their material circumstances so as to counter arguments that their area is an environmental hazard. Since the early 80s, a group of professionals has been assisting in development projects, such as a water protection scheme. The Matiwane's Kop Development Committee was formed to manage these projects, for which overseas funding has been acquired.

To date the freehold tenure of Matiwane's Kop is still expropriated, and there are no signs that the state is prepared to implement much-needed development projects so as to overcome a century of neglect. The community has the will to develop; it is now up to the state to provide the means. **

STEINCOALSPRUIT

The Steincoalspruit farms (2 295 hectares) were bought by a syndicate of Christian Africans in 1874 and 1877. The landowners were informed in 1977 that their land was to be expropriated and they were to be moved. In 1977/8 the tenants were moved to Ekuvukeni (55km from Ladysmith), an arid closer settlement riven with faction fighting. In 1978/9 the Steincoalspruit farms were expropriated by the government, but twelve years later, the landowners still reside on their farms, determined not to be moved.

As the name suggests, there are coal deposits in the area, and it is suspected that this was an additional motive behind the expropriation and the threat to move the landowners. The issue of compensation for the loss of mineral rights was never resolved, and in 1988 and early 1990 a lawyer acting on behalf of the community wrote to the Minister of Development Aid requesting that the expropriations be reversed in the light of recent policy decisions.

Initially the landowners did not know that they could resist removal, and so they agreed to move on certain conditions, one being that they be adequately compensated for mineral rights. The state declared that the coal deposits were negligible and refused this request. The landowners called in the KwaZulu government to assist them. In 1980 KwaZulu informed the community that the S.African government had confirmed that they were to be moved but no further details were divulged, and since then the landowners have lived in a state of insecurity and fear. They decided however that they would resist removal altogether.

The insecurity of tenure and the removal of tenants has had a disastrous effect on the landowners, whose population in 1987 was estimated to be 676 people. Before the relocation of the tenants (11 188 in 1978 alone), there were 3 churches, a primary school,

3 shops and the materials for the construction of a secondary school. Once the tenants were moved however, the shops closed, the primary school and 2 churches were also closed or fell into disrepair, and the secondary school was not built.

But the landowners' houses are well constructed and surrounded by trees and gardens, and there is plenty of water even in drought years. A 1987 development survey conducted by the Institute of Natural Resources, at the request of the landowners, found that 'the farms ... have a moderate agricultural potential and a natural resource base that is presently underdeveloped. Access to commercial centres for the supply of inputs is generally favourable, and there are a number of opportunities for the promotion of small businesses.'

This survey is proof that with the restoration of freehold tenure, the sale of their mineral rights at advantageous prices, plus adequate extension services and credit facilities, the Steincoalspruit landowners would be in a position to farm their land productively. They are adamant that they will not be moved, and over the years have engaged the assistance of lawyers, anti-apartheid organisations and opposition M.P.s to assist them in their struggle to retain title to their land and to be given the chance to transform themselves into a viable community.

They are still awaiting a reply from the Minister of Development Aid to their lawyer's letter requesting a withdrawal of the expropriation orders. Until this is granted, there will be little development in Steincoalspruit. **

ROOSBOOM

Roosboom was a well-established and reasonably united freehold community situated on the main Durban to Johannesburg road south of Ladysmith, until 7 353 of them were relocated between 1975 and 1977 to the arid, poverty-stricken and faction-ridden resettlement camp of Ezakheni. Two extended families, which have been there for some 90 years, remain on Roosboom properties because suitable compensatory land was not available, but the state has expropriated their land. Lawyers are currently trying to have the expropriation reversed.

The means by which the main body of tenants was persuaded to move in the 1970s is a classic case of how the government has operated to sow dissension in African freehold communities. In 1960, Roosboom was placed under the Local Health Commission. In 1965 the houses were numbered. Thereafter, if residents wished to build or repair their wattle and daub houses, they had to ask for permission, and this was invariably refused. Houses

began to disintegrate, particularly in the 1973/4 heavy rains. All the residents suffered demoralisation, but the tenants felt especially insecure and a rift between them and the landowners occurred. Thus when the option of moving was presented to the community, the tenants - who were in a majority - agreed to relocation, and the refusal of the landowners to move was ignored. In 1975, Roosboom was expropriated and removals began.

One member of the landowners - Mr Elliot Mngadi - put up a spirited, although unsuccessful opposition to the removal. He then went to court to challenge the compensation offered to him, and was paid out two and a half times the original amount offered to him. Unfortunately, no-one else had the courage to tackle the state. Of 96 families interviewed by the Surplus People Project in 1980, 50 had received compensation and most were unhappy about the amount. Since the move to Ezakheni, the Roosboom people have suffered conditions which have depressed them materially and psychologically; a higher cost of living and social problems such as unemployment and crime.

The lawyers acting on behalf of the two families who remain on Roosboom have been appealing to the government for the last 18 months for the expropriation to be set aside, but with no success to date.

All that remains of the rest of the original community are rubble, abandoned graveyards and a few scattered trees. It is believed that the location of Roosboom - visible from a national road - was one of

the factors behind their early relocation. Local white farming associations campaigned vigorously to have Roosboom removed, claiming that it was an eyesore, a health hazard and that it caused harm to the image of South Africa amongst tourists (NAUNLU article 15.2.74).

Roosboom was 11 km from Ladysmith. The majority of residents used to commute daily or weekly to the Ladysmith/Colenso urban centres before the removal, and at the time of its removal, Roosboom was developing into a peri-urban suburb of Ladysmith. With infrastructural development, such as clean water and a sewage system, it could well have developed into a suburb, but one with a strong rural flavour. Ezakheni, however, is 25 km from Ladysmith and transport is a major and expensive problem.

Before the removal, agriculture was an important function at Roosboom, despite the fact that most residents were dependent on migrant wages for their income. But at Ezakheni there is no land for cattle or ploughing, and ex-Roosboom families, when interviewed in 1980, were extremely negative about conditions at Ezakheni. **

CORNFIELDS

Cornfields lies about 27 km northeast of Estcourt on land that was purchased by the Rev. W.C. Wilcox (Baptist missionary) in 1911, subsequently subdivided, and resold to Africans on freehold title. Today there are 276 registered landowners in



A view of Matiwane's Kop in 1981. African freehold tenure here dates back to the 1870s

Cornfields (approximately 600 hectares). It is a 'released' area in terms of the 1936 Trust and Land Act. In 1966 however, the state first indicated its intention to move the Cornfields community, although it was only in 1982 that the people were informed that removal was imminent. Although a large number of tenants decided to be moved, the landowners have successfully resisted relocation. They have requested the state to develop their area, and are at present trying to raise funds for development.

The population in 1983 (before the removal of tenants), according to a Hansard statement, was over 5 400. Most of the residents were tenants who were evicted from white farms and who had nowhere else to go. Decades of underdevelopment plus overcrowding have caused erosion and overgrazing. The community is poor and reliant on migrant wages. The only schooling available is one primary school; there is no electricity and roads are poor.

In 1971, the South African Native Trust bought the 253 hectare commonage from the Wilcox estate. From 1911 this commonage was understood by the community to have been set aside by Wilcox for the grazing of residents' cattle. In the 1975 KwaZulu consolidation proposals Cornfields was again identified as an area for removal. Then in 1978 the state compulsorily transferred 49 plots in Cornfields (about 84 hectares) to the South African Development Trust on the grounds that the owners could not be traced. This is currently being challenged in court.

In 1982 officials told the community that Parliament had decided on their removal and that this was an irrevocable decision. All sorts of promises were made about the removal, including the information that all landowners would receive equal land to their present holdings. This was later contradicted in Parliament by the Minister of Co-operation and Development, who said that only one landowner would receive equal land, upon which the community demanded clarification. Finally in July 1983 they were informed that the original statement was correct and that Cornfields was to be a special case.

After some confusion over which area they were to be moved to, Mqwabalanda was identified as their resettlement area. It lies near the township of Wembezi, about 20km west of Estcourt.

Initially many tenants were attracted to the notion of removal because of all the promises made about the resettlement site. The landowners generally were opposed. At a meeting in late 1983, the community decided they did not wish to move and drew up a memorandum to this effect which was sent to the Minister in 1984.

The 1985 government declaration that there

would be no more forced removals may have averted the imminent relocation of Cornfields, but the community was officially informed that those who did not move would be starved of state aid, while Mqwabalanda would receive development aid. In 1988, 395 families (mostly tenants) 'volunteered' to move to Mqwabalanda, where the promised facilities were not yet provided.

The rest of the community continued their opposition to being moved by sending a petition to the Minister. They stated their refusal to move and requested that Cornfields be upgraded. Officials confirmed in October 1989 however that Cornfields would receive no government aid.

In response to this the community has set up a Development Committee and with foreign funding, the first phase of a water development project has been successfully implemented. There are also plans to build school rooms. In addition, two members of the community have been trained as para-legal workers, and overseas funding has been promised for the construction of an Advice Office. The community has a strong commitment to remaining on their land and to developing it, but like all black freehold areas, they will need large inputs to overcome decades of underdevelopment.**

STOFFELTON AND STEPMORE COMPLEX OF FARMS

This complex of African freehold properties lie in the Underberg and Impendle Districts. They are released areas in terms of the 1936 Trust and Land Act, and are threatened with removal in terms of the KwaZulu consolidation proposals. When informed of this possibility in 1985, the Stoffelton/Loteni and Districts Farmers' Association unanimously passed a resolution recording their refusal to be moved from land which they had purchased legally.

In this resolution, they claimed to have constructed and paid for 15 school buildings and 10 church buildings in the districts, that they lived in peace with their neighbours, and they requested that the government should develop their area and give them extension services.

By early 1990, Natal Provincial Services officials had informed the local chief that their removal and incorporation into KwaZulu was imminent, but no definite dates or details could be given.

These communities therefore are living under the debilitating threat of forced removal at some unspecified date. **

Rural folk facing resettlement want official reprieve

Pietermaritzburg Bureau

Matiwane's Kop, Steincoalspruit, Roosboom, Stoffelton, Stepmore and Cornfields.

impoverishment as a result of the policy of forced removals. The Government is asked to assist with the building of schools, roads, provision of water, sanitation and electricity, agricultural and extension services and with conservation programmes.

could take place in South Africa there was a need for restitution.

In a statement Afra called on the Government "with immediate effect" to officially reprieve all communities that have been scheduled for removal, to reverse expropriations and to cease all forms of pressure -- overt or covert -- to force communities to move.

We also support the call for the institution of a programme of affirmative action for the development of these communities. We believe that the communities represented here today have for the past 30 years suffered underdevelopment and impoverishment at the hands of the National Party and its policy of forced removals. It is therefore reasonable that these communities should seek redress for these past injustices.

The memorandum also reiterates the communities' rejection of the homelands system and notes appreciation of the Government's recent statements that no areas will be incorporated into any self-governing territories against their will.

The Black Sash, Afra and the chairman of the church leaders, the Rev Khoza, expressed solidarity with the communities.

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145th Year No. 36 781

Freehold communities demand official reprieve

by ALEX CRAIG

SIX Natal rural freehold communities have demanded that if the Government is serious about a new South Africa, it should officially reprieve all communities under threat of removal and restore the title deeds and mineral rights of expropriated land to the rightful owners.

A memorandum from the communities of Matiwane's Kop, Roosboom, Stoffelton, Stepmore and Cornfields was presented to the Minister of Development and Economic Reconstruction.

THE NATAL WITNESS
Pietermaritzburg, Tuesday, June 5, 1990

Price 60c (53c + 7c GST)

The Natal Witness
6.6.1990
Land rights

As rhetoric from both the far right and far left keeps reminding us, land ownership is a highly sensitive issue. It links history to the present, confirms identity, represents security and hope: such terms as "roots" and "heart-land" powerfully evoke the great significance to people of a piece of the country called home.

It isn't difficult, therefore, to understand a little of the trauma which affected those forced to leave "black spots" during the harsh decades of grand apartheid, and it's good to hear ministerial assurances that this evil is a thing of the past. Not everyone believes that, however. Some rural communities, for example, six of them in Natal, are still under threat of removal and have recent memories of official bullying, destruction of buildings and fragmentation through partial resettlement. If the present Government's plan is merely to forget it and let the communities stay where they are, that's not good enough. The Natal communities have prepared a memorandum asking for an official reprieve, with written withdrawal of land expropriation notices and restoration of title deeds and mineral rights to their owners -- and appropriate compensation where this can't now be done. After years of imposing on these people a life of poverty, futility and dread, this is the least the NP Government can do: it should also supply funds and expertise to assist, belatedly, with community development in these areas.

a notice in the Government Gazette to that effect. It also demands written withdrawal of land expropriation notices and the restoration of title deeds and mineral rights to their owners.

The Association for Rural Advancement (Afra), the Chairman of the Natal church Leaders, Bishop Khoza Mqoko, the Black Sash all supported the memorandum and called on the Government to react positively and immediately.

The memorandum, signed by elected representatives of the communities, came in the advent of apartheid, in these areas had been the Government's policy of forced removals.

by the stroke of the Government pen. Others have seen our families and tenants driven into resettlement camps. All of us have had to face bullying officials, threats and intimidation.

Some of us have stood helplessly by as Government officials have destroyed our schools and churches. All of us have been deliberately denied our help with the development of our community. All this has been done by the Government which we have had the opportunity to elect.

Afra estimates that over 100,000 rural areas have been affected by the stroke of the Government pen.

A community of Christian Africans this week joined other "black spot" communities in asking the Government to restore the title deeds and mineral rights to land they have farmed for over 100 years.

Inhabitants of Steincoalspruit, together with five other Natal freehold communities, demanded that the government officially reprieve all communities under threat of removal and restore the title deeds and mineral rights to the rightful owners.

A memorandum from the communities of Matiwane's Kop, Roosboom, Stoffelton, Stepmore, and Cornfields was presented to representatives of the Minister of Education and Development Aid.

The Steincoalspruit farms were bought by a syndicate of Christian Africans in 1874 and after living on the land for

acquired before the 1913 Land Act which fell within areas designated "white" rural land.

An announcement by the Government was met with a response from the communities.

come a century of neglect. In the case of Steincoalspruit, the insecurity of tenure and the removal of tenants has had a disastrous effect on the landowners, whose population in 1987 was estimated to be 678 people.

Before the relocation of the tenants -- 11 188 in 1978 alone -- there were three churches, a primary school, three shops, and plans for the construction of a secondary school.

Once the tenants were moved, however, the shops closed, the primary school and two churches were also closed and fell into disrepair and the secondary school was never built.

Together with an official reprieve, the communities have called for the withdrawal or reversal of expropriations and the restoration of title deeds, full compensation for expropriated land,

Group demands return of deeds to land they farmed for 100 years

Prakash Naidoo

more than 100 years, residents were told by the state in 1977 their land was to be expropriated. In 1978 many of the tenants were moved to the arid Ekuvukeni, about 55 kilometres from Ladysmith, and a year later the farms were expropriated by the government -- but 12 years later most landowners still reside on their farms, determined not to be moved.

There are coal deposits in the area and it is suspected that this was an additional motive behind the expropriation.

Even though the government announced forced removals had ended in 1985, to date the freehold tenure of Steincoalspruit is still expropriated and there are no signs that the state is prepared to implement much-needed development projects to over-

recognition of the rights of tenants, and an urgent programme for the development of the area.

The Association for Rural Advancement (Afra), which for the past 10 years has been supporting and servicing rural communities in Natal under threat of forced removal, reaffirmed solidarity with the communities.

Spokesman for Afra Richard Clacey said it has been estimated that between 1948 and the present, more than 105 000 people from 103 black freehold areas in Natal were forced to move.

The communities concerned have become known in official government terminology as "black spots" -- black freehold land that was acquired before the 1913 Land Act and which fell within areas designated as white rural land.

MEMORANDUM FROM NATAL RURAL FREEHOLD COMMUNITIES

4 JUNE 1990

PREAMBLE

1. We the duly elected representatives of the communities of Matiwane's Kop, Steincoalspruit, Roosboom, Stoffelton, Stepmore and Cornfields are here to-day to present to the government the

demands of our communities.
2. Since the advent of apartheid we have been the victims of the government's policy of forced removals. Some of us have had our land stolen by the stroke of the government pen. Others of us have seen our families and tenants driven into resettlement camps while we have waited in a state of insecurity as to when we would be forced to follow suit. All of us have had to face bullying officials, threats and intimidation. Some of us have stood helplessly by as

government officials have destroyed our schools and churches. All of us have been deliberately denied any help with the development of our community. All this has been done by a government which we have never had the opportunity to elect.

3. We met with guarded optimism the announcement in 1985 that the government had suspended removals. Yet when we asked for the government to restore our land, we were met with deaf ears. We continued to suffer the visits of government officials who continued to point us in the direction of the resettlement camps we had refused to move to for so long.

4. We welcome the recent statements by Mr De Klerk that his government is going to scrap apartheid. We note his call for us to forget the past and to look to a new future.

5. We therefore wish to point out the steps the government must take on the path to a new future.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY AT A MEETING ON 3RD JUNE 1990 BY REPRESENTATIVES OF MATIWANE'S KOP, STEINCOALSPRUIT, STOFFELTON, STEPMORE, ROOSBOOM AND CORNFIELDS:

This meeting demands that the government

**1.
REPRIEVAL**

Officially reprieves all communities that have been under threat of removal;

- issues a notice in the Government Gazette to that effect,

- publicly informs our communities of this fact at a meeting arranged by the representatives of our local community structures,

**2.
WITHDRAWAL OR REVERSAL OF
EXPROPRIATIONS
RESTORATION OF TITLE DEEDS**

Withdraws or reverses the land expropriations, restores the title deeds and mineral rights to the rightful owners;

- Instructs the Registrar of Deeds to write to each landowner informing that person that the ownership has been duly transferred back to their names,

**3.
RESTORATION OF LAND**

Restores land to the previous and rightful owners, where in the past land has been expropriated and the owners moved against their will;

- takes appropriate action where the land has been sold,

**4.
COMPENSATION**

Fully compensates expropriated landowners, where mineral rights have been ceded in the past as a result of forced expropriation, and benefits have been made thereof,

Fully compensates expropriated landowners where expropriated land has been sold or leased, and benefits have been made therefrom,

Restores expropriated landowners to their past position by compensating them for pain and suffering, economic underdevelopment and impoverishment caused by the forced removals process or threat thereof,

**5.
TENANTS**

Recognises the rights of tenants to continue to live on our land undisturbed and makes more land available for all our communities;

- Notes that over time people have been forced to move onto our land as tenants,

- Notes that some are members of our families and others were forced off white farms and came to our communities with nowhere else to go; that they are now an integral part of our community,

**6.
DEVELOPMENT**

Institutes an urgent programme of affirmative action with regard to the development of our communities because we have, for many years, suffered economic underdevelopment and impoverishment as a consequence of the policy of forced removals;

- Provides assistance with the building of schools and notes that we have been building our own schools at great costs to ourselves in the face of their refusal to provide assistance,

- Provides assistance with infrastructural development such as roads,

- Provides assistance with water projects, sanitation facilities and electricity,

- Recognises the need for planned development with the consent and on the terms of the community,

- Assists with agricultural and extension services to allow us to farm on a viable basis,
- Channels agricultural assistance through our local structures including our Farmers Associations,
- Assists and supports community based development projects,
- Assists in conservation programmes in consultation with and on the terms of the community, noting that our areas have been officially neglected for a long time, and have suffered ecological damage as a consequence,

7.

LOCAL REPRESENTATION, ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT

Recognises our existing local community representative structures, and our rejection of any

government local authority structures that are imposed on us without our consent,

8.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL REPRESENTATION AND GOVERNMENT

Recognises our total rejection of the homeland system and notes our appreciation of recent statements by the Government that no areas will be incorporated into any Self Governing territories against their will,

Fully recognises our demand for a unitary, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

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Steincoalspruit in 1981: physical decay after the tenants were moved to a resettlement camp in 1977/8



One of the houses at Cornfields. This area has been occupied by black freeholders since 1910/11

**PRESS STATEMENT FROM THE
ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL ADVANCEMENT
4TH JUNE 1990**

1. For the past 10 years AFRA has been supporting and servicing rural communities in Natal under threat of forced removal as a result of the Nationalist government's Apartheid policy.

2. We wish to re-affirm our solidarity with the freehold communities represented here who for more than 30 years have lived and suffered under the imminent threat of forced removals and the broader policy of homeland development and apartheid.

3. We are painfully aware of their bitter struggle for many years against unilateral land expropriations, Section 5 of the Black Administration Act and other draconian legislation, threats and intimidation, the sowing of dissension within sections of the community, the systematic programme of underdevelopment and demoralisation, and other forceful strategies. It has been estimated that between 1948 and the present more than 105 000 people from 103 black freehold areas in Natal were forced to move.

4. We are also aware that previous public promises by government in 1985 to suspend the policy of forced removals did not put a halt to this inhuman practice. This was replaced by forced incorporation of communities into the bantustans and more subtle strategies to achieve the removal of communities in the name of apartheid development.

5. We welcome moves by the De Klerk administration to address the issue of dismantling the apartheid

system and the Minister of Development Aid's recent statement that the forced incorporation of communities into the self-governing territories and the development of "Independent Homelands" would no longer be pursued as policy.

6. All of the communities represented here have faced removals in terms of the development of the KwaZulu bantustan. We are therefore concerned that in the light of the above government statements the communities represented here have still not been officially reprieved; that the land unilaterally expropriated at Matiwane's Kop, Steincoalspruit and Roosboom has still not been restored to the rightful owners; that pressures continue to be exerted on communities to move.

7. We therefore call on the government with immediate effect to officially reprieve all communities that have been scheduled for removal, to reverse the expropriations and to cease all forms of pressure - covert or overt - to force communities to move.

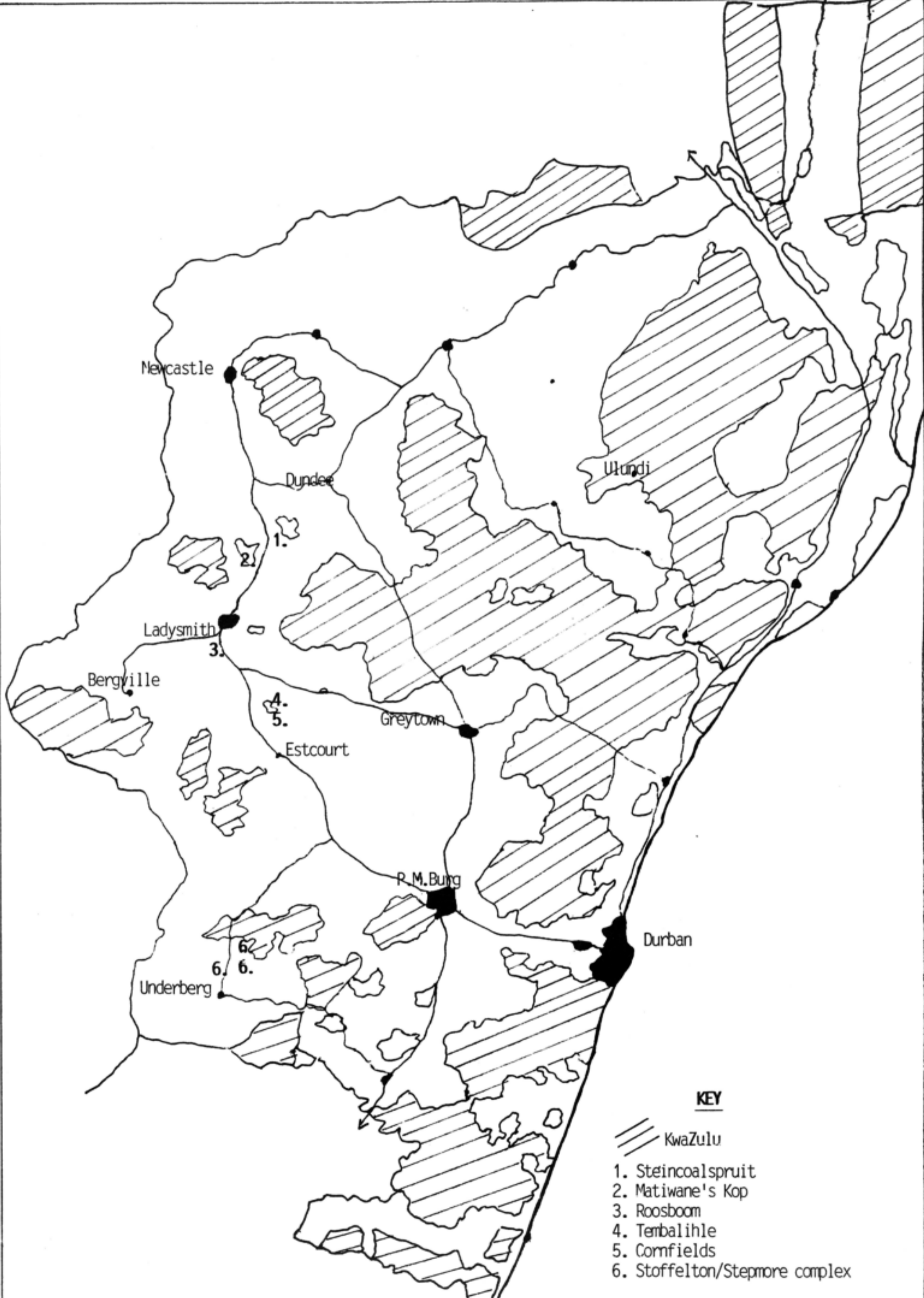
8. We also support the call for the institution of a programme of affirmative action for the development of these communities. We believe that the communities represented here to-day have for the past thirty years suffered underdevelopment and impoverishment at the hands of the National Party and its policy of forced removals. It is therefore reasonable that these communities should seek redress for these past injustices.

9. We also believe that all future developments affecting these communities should be on the terms dictated by the communities themselves through democratically elected representative structures.***

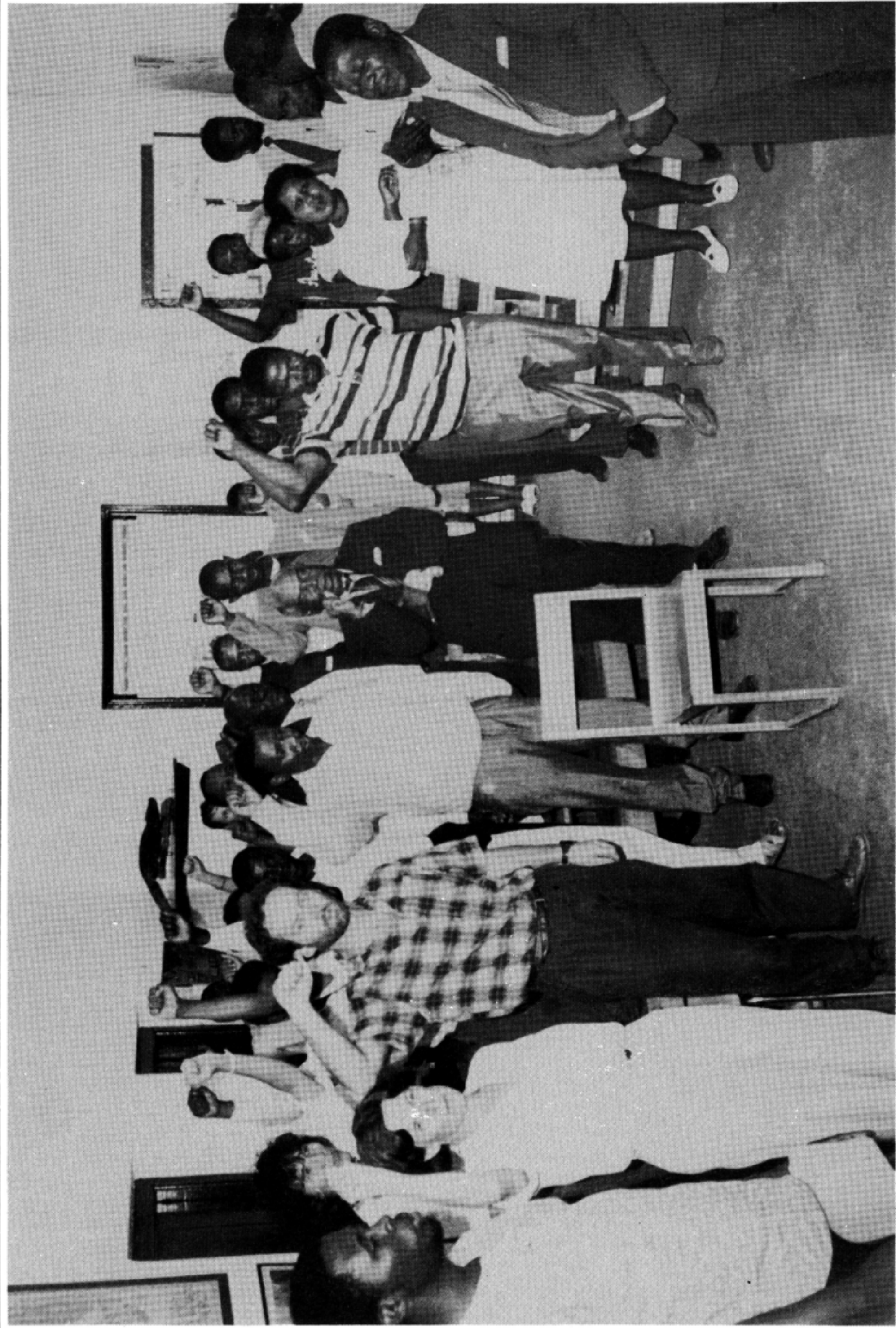
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MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF AFRICAN FREEHOLD AREAS IN RURAL NATAL



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