

# AFRA



Newsletter of the Association For Rural Advancement Number 17 September 1992

## Homeland consolidation behind land transfer plan?

**T**HE government is planning to transfer about 600 000 hectares of state land in Natal to KwaZulu administration. Nationally, the government wants to put about 1.2 million hectares under homeland administration.

Government claims that the reason for considering administrative transfer was pressure from the homelands for more land. This gives AFRA and the communities little comfort. Transfer of administration will amount to control over land settlement and use.

It was repeatedly pointed out that such a transfer contradicts government undertakings in its White Paper as well as agreements struck at CODESA. Communities affected also reject the transfer plans.

A great deal of secrecy surrounds the transfer plan. Only homeland leaders have been consulted, not the communities affected.



Transfer of administration to homelands will mean control over land settlement and use and will make land reform more complicated.

We can only conclude that the government is using the sensitive issue of land as a bargaining chip to buy support from the homelands and to bolster the power of these leaders in negotiations.

The planned transfer again shows how government wants to shirk its rural development responsibilities. It is

pursuing short term political gains at the expense of a coherent development strategy.

The deputy Minister of Land Affairs' actions also appear to make a mockery of attempts to resolve the land question through the Advisory Commission on Land Allocation (ACLA).

☛ more on page 2

# Background to transfer

WHEN the SADT was abolished in April 1992, 1.2 million hectares of the land it held was transferred to the Ministry of Land and Regional Affairs. Now the government wants to transfer this 1.2 million hectares to the homelands' administration. Whether there will be joint administration between the government and homelands or sole administration by the homelands, is still unclear.

## What does the planned transfer mean for Natal?

In Natal, about 600 000 hectares of this 1.2 million hectares will go to KwaZulu. Much of the land in question currently has white leaseholders, whose leases ends on December 31 1992. Much of this land is also the subject of land claims among rural communities with whom AFRA works.

## Previous transfers

On October 16 1991, Mr De Klerk announced that the DDA and SADT would be abolished on April 1 1992.

On March 30 1992 the SADT still held 4.2 million hectares of land.

Ownership of 3 million hectares passed to the six homeland governments in May 1992. Developments on this land had been run by the homelands since 1985. The SADT had already transferred 4 million hectares to the six homelands and 10 million hectares to the TBVC states. The cost of land buying in the name of consolidating apartheid states was said to be R1 364 896 789. This figure was revealed in parliament in March 1992.

Another 1.2 million hectares outside the homelands was passed to the Departments of Public Works and Regional and Land Affairs.

## What does the government say?

The government says homeland governments are putting pressure on it for more land. Yet, in its White Paper on Land Reform, the government said it would not incorporate further land into the homelands. The homeland governments said in CODESA that they were happy to support a moratorium on further land transfers to TBVC states. They said they supported such a moratorium on the acceptance that the homelands would be reincorporated into South Africa.

***At the time of going to press, it was not clear when a decision would be made about the proposed transfer.***

## Where is the land?

THE government has refused to release details about the exact location of this land. AFRA's own research shows that it involves the following:

- Nongoma
- Impendle
- Ingwavuma
- Joelridge
- Mahlabatini
- Qudeni
- Wilgefontein
- Newcastle
- Driefontein (Ladysmith)
- Bergville
- Estcourt
- Franklands (Port Shepstone)
- Ekuvukeni
- Mount Currie
- Matatiele
- Vryheid
- Utrecht
- Charlotte Dale
- Ntambanana (near Empangeni)
- Nondweni
- Babanangolsipingo
- Umzinto
- Clermont Extension 4
- KwaDabeka
- Kloof
- High Flats
- Dennisfield
- Nondweni
- Nqutu (farms & townlands)
- Nkandla
- Edendale Ext 3 & 4
- Landauville
- Somkele
- Edgley
- Pomeroy
- Duff's Road





The ACLA at Charlestown. Left to right: Professor Richard van der Ross, Professor Harriet Ngubane, Professor Nic Olivier, Justice T van Reenen and Mr NJ Kotze.

## ACLA comes to Natal...



Members of the Roosboom community listen to their representatives give evidence to ACLA.

**T**HE government-appointed Advisory Commission on Land Allocation (ACLA) recently held two public hearings on land claims in Natal.

The Roosboom public hearing was held at the Ladysmith Town Hall on August 18 and the Charlestown public hearing was held at Charlestown on August 19.

At the hearings, the land claiming communities said they were working with ACLA under certain conditions and that they would use other means to get back their land if ACLA could not deliver.

Members of ACLA would not say when they would advise the state president

about what should happen to the land being claimed. However, communities made it clear that they wanted a positive answer to their claim and would not be prepared to wait long for this.

At the Charlestown hearing, Mr Raubenheimer, chief director of the NPA's Community Services Department said the NPA would not support land that is being claimed at Charlestown falling under a separate local authority. This was suggested by the Development Services Board (DSB) in its evidence to ACLA.

Mr Raubenheimer said the Provincial And Local Authorities Act, passed in

July this year, gave his Administrator the power to put things together, not to pull them apart. "So, the NPA cannot support cutting Clavis from Charlestown," he said.

Commenting on the legal status of the land being claimed in Charlestown, he said that technically it is now owned by the Development Services Board (DSB). "But," he added, "the DSB is a creature of the state, under the Administrator of Natal."

He added that he was confident the "headache" could be unravelled.

---

☞ *Community experiences, as told to ACLA, on pages 4 to 10*

---

**"In our own words..."**

# **Our school was destroyed**



Mrs Ethel Hlatshwayo tells of the pain at seeing the oldest school at Roosboom demolished.

---

Mrs Hlatshwayo was a scholar and then a teacher at the St Hilda's Girls' High School in Roosboom. When the Roosboom community was removed to Ezakheni in 1976, St Hilda's was completely destroyed by the government.

---

I want to tell people how I felt when the school at Roosboom was demolished. St Hilda's Girls' High School was founded by Ellen Margaret Cooke, who came from England.

"Her aim was to help the African girls in the community of Roosboom and places around. Girls from all over the Union flocked to this school.

"She established a day school, an intermediate school and a high school. She also established a domestic science school and a spinning and weaving department to try to help African girls become able to help earn a living.

"The portion of land where this school was, was offered to Ellen Margaret Cooke by my ancestor, John Khumalo.

"This school was a help, not only to Roosboom girls, but the whole of Natal, Transvaal and the Orange Free State, for here girls could learn to cook, sew, spin and weave and received a good knowledge of English.

"I was a scholar at this school and I also became one of the staff in the domestic science department.

"In 1959 Dr Verwoerd, then prime minister, came to visit the school. As usual, all the work done by the school was displayed for the visitors to see. To our

dissapointment, we learnt that the prime minister had come to declare the closure of St Hilda's Girls' School. Dr Verwoerd said there were factories where the things we produced at the school were machine-made. He also said that Bantu Education was to be introduced and Afrikaans taught.

"For me, it meant that I would not be able to teach, since I did not have knowledge of Afrikaans and Bantu Education.

"In 1976 we were moved to Ezakheni and our land became wasted land. Buildings were broken down. At St Hilda's everything was destroyed. The plots we owned - I had land given me by my ancestors - were taken away.

"When we moved to Ezakheni it affected our community, especially the younger generation. There was loss of respect. We had to mingle with people who were not of our standard.

"Nevertheless, above all that has happened, we're now eager to return to Roosboom - old as we are. Our hope is for our poor children and grandchildren to go back to Roosboom. That is what I pray for every day, that they may go back to the land of our ancestors."



---

**"In our own words..."**

# The story of Elliot Mngadi

by Peter Brown, former AFRA chairperson

I first got to know Elliot Mngadi, a leading figure in Roosboom, on a visit to Roosboom in 1953. Roosboom was a hardworking, law-abiding, vibrant, essentially unified community. It might not have looked very pretty from the outside, but you had to get inside to know what it was like.

"When Joseph Khumalo leased Roosboom with an option to buy, he decided to buy in 1907 to make tenure more secure. He didn't have the money to do this on his own, so he got a group of friends together and they formed a syndicate. One of the men in the syndicate was Elliot Mngadi's father.

"Elliot grew up and went to school there - St Hilda's College For Girls. If you were a small enough boy, St Hilda's would take you. He grew up with the same moral background and support which Mrs Hlatshwayo referred to.

"Elliot's father couldn't afford to send him to high school so he went to Johannesburg, where he worked in a kitchen and went to night school. He then worked in a store and worked himself up to be storeman.

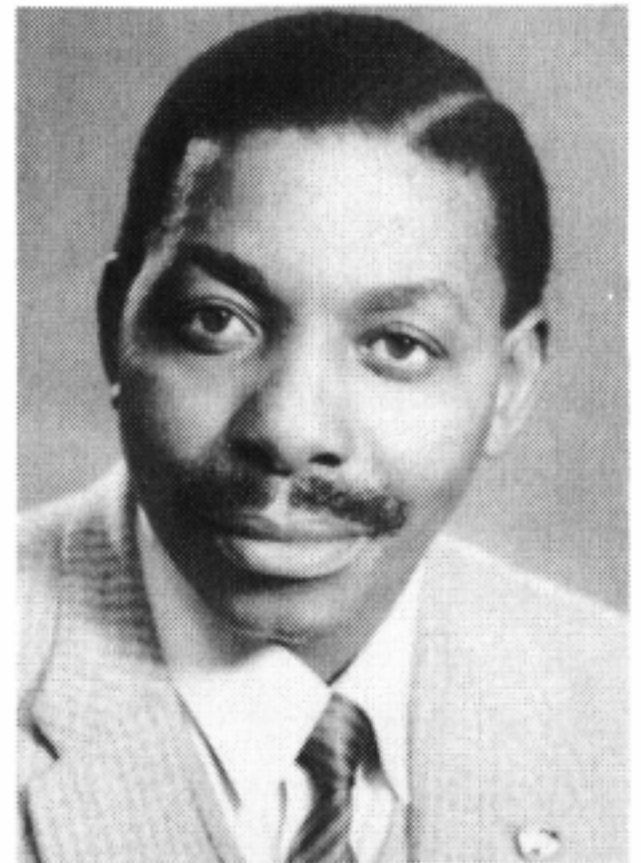
"In the late 1940s he married and returned to live at Roosboom. He got a job as Messenger of the Court for the Ladysmith District.

"When apartheid policies began to have effect and resettlement started, Elliot left his job as Messenger of the Court and became an organiser among black freehold communities, committed to fighting resettlement. At the centre of the resettlement policy was Roosboom. Roosboom had 570 houses, five churches, three schools, two shops, two cemeteries and a dip.

"In 1964 Elliot organised a conference, attended by more than 1 000 delegates from 'black spots' in Natal. The conference sent an appeal to the government to end 'black spot' removals. The government's response was to ban Elliot.

"He was confined to the Ladysmith District and opened a tearoom. Then he was removed from Roosboom - from two four-roomed houses to a single room tin shack and tent in Ezakheni.

"He was offered compensation which he challenged in court. It took the state one year to reply to his claim. In the end he was paid two and a half times the amount he was originally offered. He was the only Roosboom person who challenged the compensation paid out. Everyone else in the community was too demoralised."



Mr Elliot Mngadi as a young man. He was a leading figure in Roosboom's struggle against removal.

---

Elliot Mngadi fought against forced removal all his life. He suffered a banning order and eventual removal for his resistance. Elliot Mngadi died in 1990, before the Land Acts and Group Areas Act were scrapped. The possibility of Roosboom people getting their land back seemed a distant dream then. Today, it might come true...

---

---

*"In our own words..."*

# Let me die at Roosboom



Mrs Agnes Sokhule, former resident of Roosboom, now living in Ezakheni.

---

Mrs Sokhulu tells of the injury people suffered during the Removal of the Roosboom community. She also tells of damage to property and how people saw their land being leased out to white farmers for grazing.

---

**B**efore we were moved from Roosboom, several meetings were called. The worst one was at Gwala Gwala Store.

"While we were waiting for the officials, we saw a stream of army vehicles approaching. People ran helter skelter. Some, who were carrying babies on their backs dropped these babies, others fell into dongas in the rush to get away. Many people were hurt.

"After that, a message was sent to the community that we would be moved.

"On the day of the removal, there was heavy and continuous rain, so the vehicles didn't come. After the rains stopped the removals started.

"Some people didn't know the removals were taking place because they were at work.

"If you didn't hurry home, you'd find your house on fire with your belongings still inside. The white people in the trucks set the houses alight. The whites who came to remove us were armed.

"I had some puppies and a dog. While I was collecting my belongings, one of the white people went up to them and took one of the puppies and walked away.

"I became very annoyed. I was so angry that I went up to him and snatched away the puppy. When I

did that he turned to me and said: 'What are you doing, you bloody kaffir!' But he did nothing.

"Then, when I was loading my belongings and my dog and the puppies into the truck, I heard the same white tell the others what I had done. I became afraid and thought that maybe I would die because of trying to protect my puppies.

"At a certain spot the whites gave the people of Roosboom money and told us to leave. No one knew what the money was for.

"In Roosboom we had different sized pieces of land. My land was half an acre but I could survive on it through growing vegetables.

"When we were removed from Roosboom we thought the government was going to develop the land there. Instead, we only saw livestock grazing on our land. Some of our land was even leased to white farmers.

"All that we want is for the Commission to hear our appeal and that we'll be able to go back.

"We will not forget. I myself would be very happy if I could die and be buried at Roosboom, old as I am."



---

*"In our own words..."*

# Government must solve our problems

I was born and brought up in Charlestown. According to my knowledge, Charlestown was divided into three parts - Charlestown, Clavis and Clavis Extension. I was living at Clavis.

"I remember that there were booklets we used for paying rent. After a long time, these booklets were collected. They have never been returned, up to now. These booklets would be used as proof of purchase. Rents were paid for about 10 years, after which the owner of the booklet would be regarded as the owner of the land.

"In 1953 we saw many firms established in Clavis. Then, these firms said we had to have permits. The residents of Charlestown stood up against the permits.

"After that, we saw many lorries coming into the place. These lorries came and went further until they reached the end of Clavis. The people in the lorries started building shacks there.

"Nobody among the residents knew anything about those shacks. We only heard rumours that the shacks were being built for us so that we could be removed while the municipality built better houses for us.

"The community met and decided to take the

matter to court. As a result, the shacks were removed.

"Some time afterwards the lorries came back. The lorries kept on coming until we were all eventually removed to Ozisweni. The removal was very painful. While you were collecting your goods, a bulldozer would come and flatten your house. There were people carrying guns who said if we didn't move away our houses would be burnt. Some houses were burnt.

"When we came to Ozisweni we found a shack with one room. Most of our property was soaked in water because we were removed during the rainy season.

"At Clavis, I had a five-roomed house on a half and acre plot. At Ozisweni, it was this one-roomed shack, which we were not allowed to extend. At Charlestown I paid R1 in rent. At Ozisweni this went up to R8.39. There were also no jobs. After our removal from Charlestown, the factories moved to Newcastle.

"I'm pleased that today the government has sent the Commission to listen to our complaints. We hope our problems will be solved. "



Mrs Anna Mntanzi 58 year old former resident of Charlestown.

---

**Mrs Mntanzi remembers the booklets in which Clavis tenants' rent payments were recorded. There was an agreement that after about 10 years, tenants who had been paying rent would be regarded as the owners of the land**

---

*"In our own words..."*

# Our persecution must end



Mrs Jabula Agnes Khoza says the Charlestown people's persecution must end.

---

Mrs Khoza was working at a factory in Charlestown on the day of the removal. She was fetched from the factory and when she got home, she had little time to pack all the family's belongings.

---

I hope that today we will come to the end of our persecution. I was born on July 28 1947. I started schooling here in Charlestown at various churches until the time when I got to high school.

"On the day of the removal, I was at work in the factory. I had an old lady looking after my children.

"Those of us who were at work were fetched. We had guns pointed at us.

"When I reached home I found it chained and there was a Caterpillar pulling the chain. People were taking goods out of the house.

"When you said you wanted to remove things from the rafters, the men who came to remove us would not agree. Food fell onto the ground. Then we got onto lorries.

"When we arrived on the other side, we found open land, no fences.

"We were put into this one-roomed shack - a family of six children, mother and father, kitchenware, dining room furniture, bedroom furniture. We failed to squeeze ourselves and our property in.

"So, we had to leave our property outside in the rain. We had no relatives with whom we could store our things.

"The children and women slept inside. Husbands slept outside.

"We had no food, as this had been spilt in the removal. We were given small packets of mielie meal and soup. But we had nothing with which to make a fire.

"Most painful was that there was a school in Charlestown.

"In the new place there was no school, no shops. We had a problem. And we still have a problem.

"Most of us are unemployed because of the distance to the factories. If you go to look for work, you must be able to pay R4 a day for transport.

"If you don't have that money, you can't look for work.

"This year we are paying more than R16 for rent. It is raised time and again. We would be very pleased if we could return to Charlestown."



**"In our own words..."**

# We have our title deeds

I'm one of those who lived and worked in Charlestown. I was fetched twice by the police from the factory where I was working. "When I tried to explain that the land was mine and that I didn't want to move, the reply was: 'Put that land on wheels and go with it'.

"While I was in Johannesburg, I got a phone call from my brother asking me to come home. When I got home I was imprisoned. I was 60 years old and had never even entered a court before. I was tried for five days and on the sixth day they said I was being prosecuted for trespassing.

"I was placed in difficulties because even when you said you didn't want to move they would get in and take you out of your house. The women told me this while I was in prison.

"They said they would take the people and put them in a truck. Everything in the house would be collected by people who were not driving the trucks.

"We lost a lot of our property and, in my case, I found my cattle scattered all over the place. I had a lot of cattle.

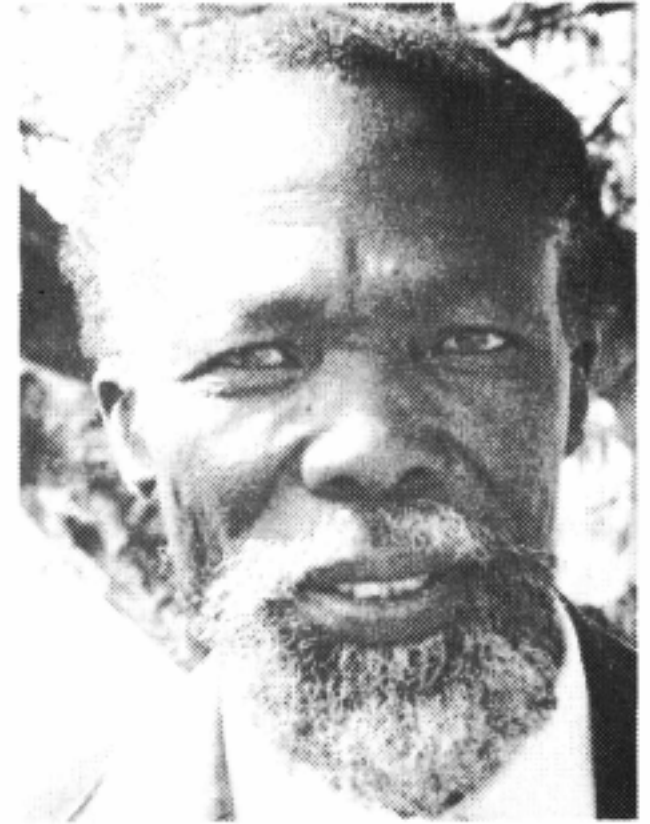
"It's not true that the removal took place from 1975 to 1977. I was removed in 1978.

"What was most painful was that the schools were

destroyed before the removal was complete. We had to send our children to different places because everything was so confused.

"Afterwards our properties were leased to other people. Our cattle were impounded and placed in camps here in Clavis. After six months they were moved to Voklsrust. We had no money to pay to get them out of the pound.

"We want restoration of our land - the land that was bought by our forefathers and for which we have title deeds. We have them even now. There is grazing on this land. Our youth will come back because they see the good of the development we will carry out here. This is what they have told us. This is what they will do..."



Mr Solomon Makhubu, 75 years old and still fighting for his land at Charlestown.

---

Mr Solomon Makhubu is chairperson of the Bambisanani Bathengi Charlestown Committee, the body that has been coordinating former residents' struggle to regain their land rights in Charlestown.

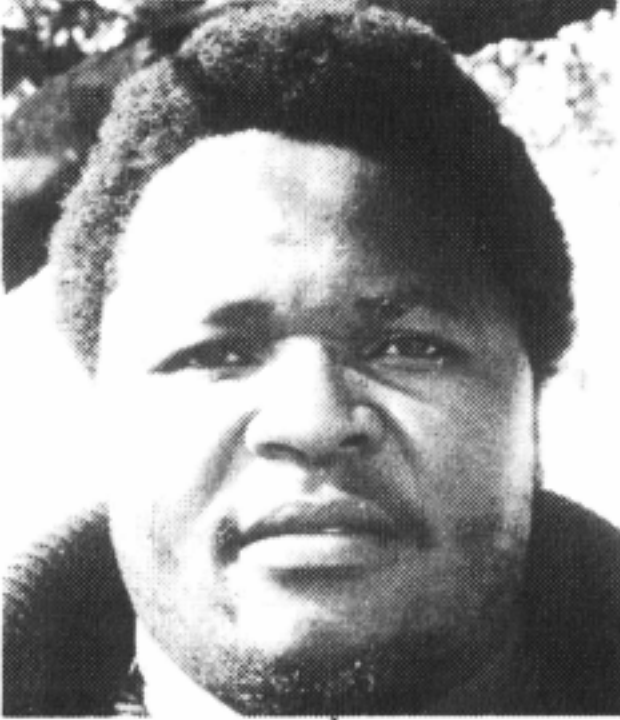
---



Mr Solomon Makhubu, pointing to the factory in Charlestown where he once worked. After the Charlestown community's removal, the factory closed down.

*"In our own words..."*

# Our ancestors graves are at Charlestown



Mr Zwane, vice-chair of the Bambisanani Bathengi Charlestown Committee.

**O**n top of all the pain and ill-will done by the government to the community, we are saying: 'It has been a long time for us staying with a wound that oozes pus'. Therefore, we are saying to this Commission that it recommend to the state president that this wound will spread over if it is not treated with suitable medicines.

"The return of the land is the first thing to happen. Following very close to that is the return of our title deeds, as they were.

"There must be no delays in returning our title deeds. We don't want the government to say that there is a law to be proclaimed before we get our title deeds. The government can do that on its own.

We have our ancestors' graves at Charlestown. They should not be lonely there.

"Sometimes we become sick because our navel cords are at this place. I hope that this is the final stage in this struggle for our land and that what will follow here is the return of our land.

This Commission has to make it happen by telling the state president that the owners of the land want it back.

"If this Commission is really committed, we hope that Charlestown people will be talking on their land within a short time. Here we are talking of the land that we have title deeds to.

"The responsibility of the Commission is to recommend to the state president that Charlestown returns to its owners."

"The return of our land must be the first thing to happen. Following very close that is the return of our title deeds, as they were. There must be no delay in returning our title deeds. The government must not say that there is a law to be proclaimed before we get our title deeds."



The Bambisanani Bathengi Charlestown Committee, coordinating the struggle for Charlestown to return to forcibly removed people.



## **AmaHlubi Board of Control Draws In More Sectors**

THE AmaHlubi Board of Control met recently to draft a constitution. The Board has been spearheading the community's attempts to claim land in the Estcourt District. Interesting and far reaching changes about the composition and operation of the Board were put forward. Among these were that:

- all sectors in the community should be represented on the Board. These sectors are women, youth, tribal council, the church and izinduna. There will also be general community representation
- regular community meetings will be held to ensure there is community participation in decision making

The draft constitution is being discussed in the community and meetings with the sectors have been arranged.



Chief Langalibalele of the AmaHlubi. It was during his time that the AmaHlubi lost their land.

### **Land claim submission sent to ACLA**

The AmaHlubi land claim, involving some 90 000 hectares of land in the Estcourt District has been sent to ACLA. The Commission has not yet set a date for the public hearing, at which representations may be made.

The Amahlubi claim is the largest single claim being made in Natal.

## **Crimen Case Goes To Court**



Mr Andries Hadebe of Crimen has asked the court to return his land.

MR Andries Hadebe, an 81 year old former Crimen landowner, has brought a supreme court application to get back his land. Mr Hadebe's land was expropriated, along with that of other Crimen residents, 15 years ago. The expropriation was part of the government's policy of 'black spot' removal. Mr Hadebe and the families of 99 other title holders were forcibly removed to Ezakheni, a township under KwaZulu.

The expropriated land was left to lie unused for 11 years after the expropriation. Then, it was sold to a Mr Derek Dreyer, now dead.

Mr Hadebe in his application says that the correct procedures were not followed in the expropriation. The government therefore never got title to the land.

The government has indicated that it intends opposing Mr Hadebe's application. Their answering affidavit will be lodged on September 30 1992.

Other families who were expropriated are awaiting the outcome of Mr Hadebe's application with keen interest. Mr Hadebe's test case, if successful, could involve further claims on some 623 hectares of land at Crimen.

Mr Hadebe, himself has also shown interest in the proceedings of ACLA hearings in Natal. He attended the public hearing at Charlestown recently, to hear former Charlestown residents argue their case for return of their land.

# *Private tenure promotes good land use*

**T**HE government has come out strongly in favour of private individual tenure for South Africa.

In its White Paper it says: "Private ownership gives people a stake in the land, offers social security, promotes the optimal use of land and also stimulates an awareness of the importance of the preservation of this valuable resource."

This belief in the value of private individual ownership is made concrete through land laws passed earlier this year. These laws include the Upgrading Of Tenure Rights Act and the Informal Township Establishment Act.

The Upgrading Of Tenure Act provides for "inferior forms of tenure" to be upgraded to full private ownership.

Examples of such "inferior forms of tenure" are leasehold, quitrent, permission to occupy and certificate of occupation.

In rural areas, where most land is held in terms of permission to occupy and certificate of occupation, land will have to be surveyed.

People will also have to produce documentary proof of occupation. In addition, the landowner will also have to agree



that upgrading should occur.

This law also provides for tribal land to be privatised.

Although communities living in the homelands see the privatisation of land as a means to dispossess them, many homeland governments have accepted the principle of privatisation of land.

KwaZulu, Ciskei and Qwa Qwa have legislation to effect this privatisation.

The Informal Township Establishment Act makes communal residential occupation and development of land bought on the market subject to state control and approval.

In the section dealing with rural villages, the White Paper states: "To enable tribes and tribal communities to acquire land for communal possession, without, however, compromising high potential agricultural land or other land unsuitable for residential communal land use, the Bill [now the Informal Township Establishment Act] provides that land which a tribe wishes to use on a communal basis for residential purposes must first be declared suitable for such use by the Administrator."



# Little evidence that private tenure is best



**T**HE idealised opposition of private tenure to 'traditional' tenure has little in common with how these systems actually work, says Catherine Cross, a researcher at the Rural-Urban Studies Unit at the University of Natal and an advisor to the National Land Committee.

She says there is little evidence that private individual tenure is necessary for productive agriculture.

On the contrary, private individual tenure has not promoted transfer of land to efficient farmers, it has not significantly improved security of tenure, nor has it encouraged a land

market or helped with provision or increase of production or commercial goods.

In South African rural communities, social relations are informed by a land ethic which recognises the prior right of first settlers and the community's obligation to the poor. This is particularly so in rural Zulu speaking Natal. Land is as much a relation between people as it is a means of production. The land right is also concerned with security, but this is not limited to production.

Cross identifies two areas of need regarding rural tenure options. The first is for tenure reform in areas currently occupied by African people. The

second is for tenure options to serve land reform itself - in new areas available for African occupation.

In rural areas now occupied by African people the need is probably to maintain subsistence production and to preserve survival strategies people have built up. In these areas, the poor are in the majority and they need tenure that preserves their existing land rights and lays the basis for mobilizing their resources. Tenure forms that risk loss of land rights would be highly problematic. The rural poor are not in a position to move to urban areas and would be unemployable there. However, Cross cautions that tenure reform alone cannot deal effectively with rural poverty and that other development approaches are necessary.

For new areas open to black settlement the situation is less clear. When and where there is good quality farmland, tenure systems that can support optimal production will be necessary. Private property is not necessarily the answer. There is much evidence that private property is not necessary to good farming and that land title is problematic in a land reform context.

# World Bank group supports communal tenure

**T**HE term 'common property' has been largely misunderstood and falsely interpreted for the past two to three decades, write Daniel Bromley and Michael Cernea in a 1989 World Bank discussion paper.

They go on to define communal property as, "structured ownership arrangements within which management rules are developed, group size is known and enforced, incentives exist for co-owners to follow the accepted institutional arrangements, and sanctions work to ensure compliance".

Private property, they say, seems to be stable and adaptive because it has social and legal sanction to effectively exclude excess population and to resist unwanted intrusion through the power of the state.

They further dispute the common assertion that private property leads to the best use of agricultural land. Large areas of Latin America's prime agricultural land is used for cattle ranching, they say, while food crops are grown on poorer land.

And there is no evidence that privatisation reduces land exploitation when other economic

incentives are left unchanged. In developing countries, resource degradation is often attributed to communal tenure systems when it actually occurred because local institutions responsible for sustainable resource management and use were dissolved.

They argue that development assistance for sustainable agriculture, environmental protection and natural resource management will only succeed if it focuses on the local people involved.

Bromley and Cernea form part of a body of international and local opinion that emphasises using existing local institutions which people understand and support. This opinion argues that communal tenure should be supported or, alternately, get institutional support so that it may develop to new social tenures able to support modern economic activity.

In terms of this view:

- locally developed communal tenure institutions offer the cheapest and most effective on the ground land administration

- communal tenure provides good security of tenure
- communal tenure institutions can work with assets that are already available and need less outside support than other tenure systems
- they are usually ecologically effective and sustainable and can be upgraded to sustain sound land use practice even in crowded conditions
- communal tenure is indigenous and so more accessible to rural people
- it allows marginal groups in a community, such as women and youth, to retain their land use and transfer rights. Private tenure locates control in a single owner, usually male
- communal tenure can meet local needs more effectively because it develops according to local conditions
- rural communities are more supportive of communal tenure and it gives them greater control
- communal rights can be registered more easily in South Africa than private title.





## Hunger in the land of plenty

SOUTH Africa exports more food than it imports. Yet, at least 2,3 million people in South Africa are malnourished, according to government figures. And the government acknowledges that things are getting worse. Recent figures suggest that the amount of food sold was decreasing towards the end of 1991. In particular each person was on average eating less mielie meal and bread, staple foods of poor people.

During 1986 and 1988 - a period of economic growth - infant mortality rates, childhood mortality rates and deaths from nutritional deficiencies increased. Now, South Africa is experiencing an economic recession, drought, spiralling unemployment and food prices and poor people are able to grow less of their own food. (*New Ground: No. 8 1992*)

## Drought or just a dry country?

IS South Africa experiencing a drought or just another dry spell? Drought is a man made construct, asserted Dr. Johann Erasmus, an agricultural meteorologist of the Department of Agriculture. He said farmers tended to gear their operations for bumper years instead of dry ones and that if they farmed within their limits they wouldn't experience "drought". He contended that the current hot, dry weather was not a freak occurrence, but that the amount of debt which farmers have incurred was.

The old farming philosophy of getting what you could from the land had to change, he said. The government should link financial aid to land care and identify successful farmers who deserved aid.

South Africa's overall average rainfall is less than 500mm a year, which is the minimum for dry land crop farming.

Although a narrow area along the eastern and southern coastlines has fairly high rainfall, the west and interior of the country is arid or semi-arid. Of the total farm land, only 13,5% is arable and only 25% of farmers are productive.

Overgrazing and bad crop farming loses 400 million tons of topsoil a year. Each ton of maize, wheat or sugar produced costs about 20 tons of soil. (*New Ground: No. 8 1992*)

## Drought aid problems

ALMOST all of the money government has allocated to drought relief will go to white farmers. Only R20 million (2%) of this money will go to food relief for farmworkers. Homelands have been allocated R130 million.

About 13 drought relief schemes have been set up. These include aid to farmers facing sequestration and direct supply of food to hungry people. But it is unclear whether all the schemes are actually functioning. (*New Nation: July 24 - July 30 1992*)

## Another worm out of the can?

THERE is potential for another DDA-type corruption scandal, this time around the government's R660million food poverty relief programme. Investigation of the programme by a weekly newspaper showed that:

- A company recommended by the Department of Health and used extensively by state health clinics charges three times as much as non-profit food relief agencies. Lebnor Foods of Potgietersrus, the company in question, was involved in secret operations supplying food to rebel armies in Angola and Mozambique.
- Food experts have condemned the food packs supplied by this company as being



nutritionally inadequate.

- The Department of Health has allocated less than a fifth of the money intended for food relief, despite worsening famine.
- One of the four organisations given grants is run by Dr Louis Pasques, who had links with Military Intelligence and who has not been involved with hunger relief before.

Dr Pasques received R7million from the Department of Health in March 1992 and told the newspaper he would ask for another R7million.

Dr Pasques said he feeds about 150 000 people a day. Operation Hunger, an organisation that has been involved in food relief for many years, feeds about 2.3 million people a day. Operation Hunger only managed to get a grant of R10million from the Department of Health. (*Weekly Mail: June 5 - 11 1992*)

## Power to the people is possible

ONLY about 33% of South African homes have electricity but every household in South Africa could be provided with electricity at an affordable cost, argues the ANC's Science and Technology Group. They say that new power stations would not have to be built and that it would cost R10billion to install the necessary cables - only 10% of the 1992 budget.

The main obstruction to bringing electricity to all households speedily, they say, is apartheid structures.

Electricity is presently generated by ESKOM and sold to consumers through more than 400 supply authorities. These authorities are incapable of supplying consumers efficiently.

We need fewer authorities and these should be structured on a logical regional basis, the ANC says. (*Mayibuye: May 1992*)

## Land for reallocation?

ALTHOUGH he does not have reliable figures, the chairperson of ACLA, Justice T van Reenen, estimated that about 1 million hectares of land is available for resettlement and allocation. This includes former SADT land, SADF and other government department owned land.

According to the government's White Paper, the SADT owned 1,2million hectares outside the homelands. Of this, 210 525 hectares were being leased to white farmers. The leases end on December 31 1992 and the land should become available by January or February 1993. ACLA will make recommendation to the government about the future of this land. At present, the government is only considering reallocating land it owns and which has not been developed or allocated for a specific purpose. Other land transactions should be left to the market, it believes. (*South African Institute of Race Relations: Fast Facts No. 8/92 August 1992*)

## R13million for housing in Natal

NATAL is to receive R13million for housing and community facilities. The money will go to Dundee, Durban, Escourt, Gingindlovu, Greytown, Ixopo, Ladysmith, Matatiele, Newcastle, Richmond, Stanger and Vryheid. It will be used for basic services and facilities, to start conventional housing and to upgrade existing housing. (*Natal Mercury: August 12 1992*)

AFRA Newsletter No.17  
Published and produced by:  
AFRA, 170 Berg Street  
Pietermaritzburg 3201  
Laser printer supplied by  
Canadian Embassy  
Printed by: ACE PMB