

NOTES ON INANDA DAM REMOVALS

BACKGROUND

Inanda Dam is being built in the Valley of 1000 Hills on the Umgeni River a few miles outside Hillcrest. The area affected is part of kwa-Zulu. It is rural and relatively unaffected by unrest and violence. The people have simple but settled homes, some have cattle (not many), more have goats, chickens and other poultry. Many grow mealies and other vegetables. There are several good communal gardens. Roads are very poor, some now being improved due to the Dam construction needs. There is much poverty and unemployment. There are three tribal areas affected (plus a few people from other areas).

Planning for the Dam started early in the 1970's with discussions regarding the site for the Dam. In May 1973 a committee, including engineers from kwa-Zulu, visited the site of the proposed Dam and reported on findings and size of population to be moved. This generated much discussion and correspondence between kwa-Zulu Government and the then Department of Bantu Administration & Development. At one time the kwa-Zulu Government indicated that they were "not against the construction of the Dam so long as the people of kwa-Zulu will benefit and proper and adequate compensation was provided to those affected".

In 1979 it was announced by the Department of the Interior that the Dam would now be built on the South Coast of Natal.

In 1980 it was finally announced that the Dam was to be built at Inanda.

Discussion and correspondence continued until 1983. This long debate was characterised by constant complaint that the affected community was not properly consulted and that agreements were made between Government Departments and a chief (or chiefs) while the people themselves were not included or informed of developments.

In 1983 a "purchase line" was marked and affected houses numbered. A census was done to count families and the number of people to be moved. This was very inaccurate due to several factors (i.e. visits when head of family and employed members of the family were not at home; reluctance to give information to census counters because of lack of information; and misconceptions of reasons for census being made). Some houses affected were not numbered.

An Ad Hoc Committee was formed to represent the local people to discuss issues such as resettlement and compensation. This Committee later disbanded due to friction, internal politics and threats of violence, with division in the community and growing distrust of the role of the kwa-Zulu Government and some members of tribal authorities. Lack of proper communication has been, and still is, a major problem at all levels from Pretoria through Ulundi/Magistrate, Local Tribal Authorities/Community.

The three main tribal areas involved are the Ngcolosi, the Mphephethan and the **Mqadi**.

Some effort was made to offer people the choice between moving to a 'rural' area or to a township. An area called Rietvlei was offered (situated near Inchanga, towards Pietermaritzburg). Also an area called Released Area 33, part of the Inanda New Township; or Ntuzuma Township (where it was said that houses built by the Department of Co-operation & Development would be built - and where there is already an enormous list of township people awaiting houses).

The Mphephetheni decided to accept Released Area 33.

The **Mqadi** decided on Rietvlei - with some opting for Ntuzuma.

The Ngcolosi turned down all these areas offered and are persisting in their efforts to move to the "Banana Station" near Hillcrest (see later). Very little preparation or development of necessary infrastructure of any kind has taken place at any of these areas. People who have already moved to Ntuzuma are being housed in tents or temporary metal-box-like huts (called Fletcraft).

The situation of the Ngcolosi people has been complicated by the fact that their Chief changed in November 1985. In 1982 they asked for the Banana Station - land at Waterfall adjacent to a white residential area outside Hillcrest. The Banana Station was historically Ngcolosi land, but was sold many years ago (about 80 years) to the South African Development Trust, most of it has changed hands more than once and is now owned by white farmers. Since 1982 the Ngcolosi have never received a response to this request despite many efforts. Pierre Cronje (PFP MP for Greytown) visited the area several times in the last year or two and brought the request before Parliament. The people remained very anxious and to date do not know where they are to go. Last year, it was suddenly announced in the newspapers that the Banana Station at Waterfall was to be incorporated into kwa-Zulu. There was no communication with the Ngcolosi but a strong assumption (agreed by P.Cronje) that it would be for the use of the Ngcolosi. There was an immediate violent "anti" reaction by white residents and a Government Commissioner was appointed to hear representations. The Ngcolosi Chief declined to appear saying that he could not argue or discuss a matter or proposal which had never been presented to him or his people. To date we presume that no decision has been made (but I believe that in response to a request from the Chief, the Commission has (or will) meet with him and members of his Tribal Authority.

Khanyisane Development Committee and the new Chief

This is one of several DCs in the area. They normally deal with such matters as roads, water, etc. The Khanyisane Development Committee concerned itself with the problems of the people over Dam matters, pressed for information, visited the Magistrate, asked questions about resettlement conditions and compensation, etc. As a result, they were not given official status (unlike other DCs) by the Tribal Authority under the old chief. When the new Chief was installed at the end of 1985, he was supportive of the KDCs' work and officially recognised them. He replaced "indunas" and some of the Tribal Authority by democratic elections among the people. When offered Rietvlei, he turned it down for several reasons. (a) it was far separated from the rest of his already divided area of authority,

(b) it was too far from places of work, (c) danger of faction fights with neighbouring tribe who look on Rietvlei as theirs. The Chief visited the offered resettlement areas with the KDC and attended several of their meetings, showing concern for democratic ways of proceeding and for the interests of the community. Sadly over the last months he has become withdrawn from the KDC's efforts and has recently withdrawn also their official status and effectively disbanded them. It is now left to a few determined individuals to continue to struggle for peoples' rights and conditions of removal and compensation. One can only assume that pressures are being put on him and the internal politics (i.e. pro or anti Inkatha factions) are making his position almost impossible.

COMPENSATION

The land is Tribal Trust land in kwa-Zulu. The people do not own it but are allocated portions of land for their use by the Chief. Compensation to individuals is on "improvements" only. The majority of houses are small "wattle and daub" and compensation is often in the region of R1 500,00. There are some more valuable properties. Some people have already been moved, or have chosen to go before they are moved. When the removal has taken place they are taken to a Government Office in Ntuzuma where they are given a chit stating the amount of compensation awarded. Thus they have little or no opportunity to argue about the amount they receive. Most people interviewed at the time of removal are bewildered. They have no knowledge of the area they are going to or of conditions there. They do not know whether they can take their dogs, chickens, goats, etc, or where their children will go to school. They do not know how much compensation they will get.

Work has been done by private qualified individuals in valuations of properties. People have been warned not to ~~accept~~ cash cheques if they are dissatisfied with the amount but it is difficult to trace people and impossible to reach more than a small number. A couple of people are vising a Hillcrest lawyer who is preparing to make test cases. Trying to obtain clear information about official policy re. compensation has proved extremely difficult. One is directed from Department to Department, from office to office, from "pillar to post"! Officials change frequently and it seems impossible to find anyone who feels or takes responsibility.

Meanwhile houses are falling rapidly into disrepair as the owners, knowing they will have to move cannot afford to spend money on them.

Working in the area with the few brave members of the community who continue to protest is becoming more difficult as they are put at risk and have been told not to bring whites into the area any more.

Number of families affected (official figures only - very open to doubt)

Ngcolosi:	630 families
Mphephetheni:	405 families
Mqadi:	317 families