

KwaZulu - about 40 bits and pieces of reserve areas and some 140 "black spots" - is to be consolidated into a more cohesive geographical entity, in accordance with the policy of separate "Homelands" for African people. Nobody is sure exactly how many fragments of land make up KwaZulu today, but we do know that there are many, that they are scattered right across Natal, that they can never be reduced to one continuous block of land - and that further consolidation of them involves the removal of hundreds of thousands of black people from their homes. It also perpetuates the myth of a separate Zulu "nation", distinct from South Africa.

Consolidation is currently a hot political issue and Pretoria, faced with opposition from both within and without its ranks, is delaying publication of its "final" report (the latest in a long history of "final" reports). In the meantime, however, it is pressing ahead with removals in terms of consolidation - buying and expropriating land, clearing "black spots", altering the present boundaries of KwaZulu. In January 1981 Reserve 4, a scheduled area to the north of Richards Bay, was excised from KwaZulu and its estimated 20 000 people await removal in fear, uncertainty and bitterness. (See AFRA Report 13*). On the 2 and 3 of July of this year, the tenants of Kwapitela, a black-owned farm near Sani Pass were removed to a resettlement camp near Impendle; the landowners are to be moved shortly. (See AFRA Report 5: a further Report on the removals is forthcoming).

The following is a very brief chronology of consolidation proposals for Natal/KwaZulu over the last ten years: the murky background to present manoeuvrings.

1971: Intention of consolidating KwaZulu is announced: In September 1971 Pretoria announced it intended to consolidate KwaZulu; in October it said that the blueprint would be available for public discussion within 18 months. At that stage it was negotiating to replace the existing Zulu Territorial Authority with a more high-powered Legislative Assembly. Consolidation was seen as part of this process of creating a separate Zulu "Homeland".

1972: A six-piece KwaZulu proposed: In June 1972 Pretoria published its proposals for KwaZulu - a radical consolidation that reduced the territory to only six pieces. Major proposals included:

- Drakensberg Locations 1 and 2, near Estcourt, plus the Upper Tugela Location, near Bergville, to be excised from KwaZulu;
- the piece of KwaZulu near Newcastle to be linked to Msinga in the south by the addition of land in the Dundee district of KwaZulu;
- the white-owned Harding corridor to be added to KwaZulu in the south, but the coastal reserve between Port Shepstone and Port Edward to be excised;
- Jesini and Sodwana Bay in the north to be excised from KwaZulu, to form a block of white-owned land straddling the southern Mkhathini Flats.

Public reaction, outside of the Nationalist Party, was negative. The Natal Agricultural Union (NAU) rejected consolidation - *"The land they have at present is not being used to its fullest potential"*. (Zululand Times, 7.9.72). In January 1973 Chief Buthelezi of KwaZulu condemned the proposals as well.

1973: Revised ten-piece proposals approved by Parliament: Concessions were made to some of the criticisms and on 5 June, Parliament approved revised proposals. These reduced KwaZulu to ten pieces, instead of six:

- the Drakensberg Locations were retained by KwaZulu, consolidated into one block, but the populous Upper Tugela Location was still to be moved;
- the Harding corridor remained White;

- the Newcastle reserve was no longer linked to areas to the south;
- all of the state-owned Makhatini Flats (along with the substantial numbers of black people already living there) were to be added to KwaZulu.

Official estimates were that 132 000 blacks would have to move (Daily News, 28.4.73).

1975: Further amendments: Minor adjustments to the 1973 proposals were published and debated in Parliament in May, along with proposals for the other "Homelands". The 1975 proposals have formed the basis for subsequent discussion and negotiation. They also envisage a ten-piece KwaZulu, the boundaries carefully drawn to exclude all the major industrial areas of the province and to keep to the limits of land area laid down by the 1936 Trust and Land Act. The KwaZulu government rejected the proposals as too little, the NAU as too much. They make Natal look like a "*moth-eaten doughnut*", said D Sinclair, president of the NAU (Natal Mercury, 17.10.75).

1976-1978: Disagreements and delay: In 1976 the government agency BENBO estimated that to implement the 1975 proposals in South Africa would mean moving one million people and cost R797 million. As the magnitude of the exercise became apparent, pragmatists within the Nationalist Party had second thoughts; divisions appeared. In May 1977 the chairman of the BIC suggested that whites should be allowed to stay inside consolidated homelands, in the interests of "*economic viability*"; the Transvaal Congress of the Nationalist Party rejected this idea (Survey of Race Relations 1977, p.312). In September 1978 the Deputy Minister of Plural Relations reiterated that the government would not give the homelands more land than was already promised by the 1936 legislation but P W Botha himself edged away from this position, arguing that the 1936 quota was not a "*holy cow*" (Rand Daily Mail, 31.10.80). Farmers and industrialists urged the government to state when consolidation would be completed, but Pretoria avoided committing itself to any timetable. Meanwhile, in the many areas of KwaZulu threatened with removal, disturbing rumours of impending resettlement began to circulate: Nkundusi, Upper Tugela, Bilanyoni, Nibela ...

1979: van der Walt Commission appointed: In February the Prime Minister announced the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry into consolidation: a further delay. He also came out more strongly for a new approach. Consolidation, he said, should not be looked at only from a geographical point of view - economic consolidation is also important. In June demographers at the University of Natal estimated that if the 1975 proposals were carried through in Natal, 300 000 people, almost all African, would have to be moved, at a cost of R1 million. This was a very modest calculation of costs. In January 1981 the Chairman of the Commission, van der Walt, said that a meaningful geographical consolidation of homelands in South Africa would cost about R6 000 million - which he conceded is "*not possible*" (Sunday Tribune, 1.2.81).

1980: Commission's Report withheld from public: The van der Walt Report was finally submitted to the Cabinet on 6 August. Instead of being published, it was referred to two Cabinet Committees for further consideration. It appears the Botha government has rejected the sweeping proposals made in the Report (rumour has it that it suggested KwaZulu be reduced to only 3 or 4 pieces) - Koornhof has stated "*categorically*" that "*the van der Walt Commission proposals will be drastically changed*" (Natal Mercury, 14.5.81). In October 1980 Koornhof indicated the revised approach - while preference would be given to the 1975 proposals, more land, over and above the 1936 quota would be offered to the homelands provided it be used "*productively*" - i.e. whites allowed to stay (Natal Witness, 31.10.80).

The appointment of the van der Walt Commission has sparked off a fresh round of speculation, rumour and intense politicking behind the scenes. The powerful sugar industry, organised white agriculture, threatened white municipalities have all lobbied for their interest to be protected. "*Consolidation would be detrimental to the stability of the sugar industry, and because it is the major industry of Natal, it would therefore be bad for the province as a whole*", said the Chairman of the Sugar Association in April 1980 (Natal Mercury, 28.4.80).

1981: Uncertainty remains: In May the NAU organised a special Congress at which farmers urged that the 1975 proposals be implemented as soon as possible but thereafter, consolidation stop. Koornhof, guest at the Congress, refused to be drawn on specifics but restated that a certain amount of consolidation is essential and announced that removals would start in four places: Paulpietersburg, Ladysmith, Reserve 4 and Sodwana Bay.

"*The main obstacle in the way of further consolidation was the unwillingness of the Zulu people to be moved, he said*" (Natal Witness, 14.5.81).