
Down at Mqanduli

Z.S.N.

A Transkei Report

FOR SOME TIME the Government, through its spearhead, the Native Trust has been edging its way into this Mqanduli district of Tembuland in the Transkeian Territories. One of its weapons is the time worn promise of "green" pastures and better stock for those who allow their locations to be rehabilitated and fenced in. In more than one way the Trust is enticing the peasants to take a more active part and a pleasant attitude to cultivation of plantations and building of dams, etc. in the locations. At times indirect pressure is used in cases where the residents are opposed to the schemes. In locations where the people have accepted the idea of boundary fences and contours on their lands, Trust tractors are used in ploughing at reduced charges as compared with those where the residents have totally rejected the Native Trust schemes.

To date, less than a quarter of the arable land remains uncountoured, because the peasants are adamant that such acts not only decrease the carrying capacity of their lands but also that the Native Trust does not compensate them; by giving them additional land to replace that taken up by the contours. And that there is no reduction in the taxes paid for such countoured lands.

Recently, the Bantu Affairs Commissioner of the district called a meeting for discussion on the boundary fence between Ngqwara and Qokolweni locations, which are adjoining. The former is under chieftainship of Zwelivumile Mtwana and the latter under sub-chief Ephraim Sangoni. Sangoni had acquiesced in the rehabilitation of his location, while Zwelivumile of the Xesibe clan had rejected the scheme. The official concerned is all too eager to seek co-operation and see the Government schemes come to fruition in his area. The result was that, despite the vigorous opposition of the Ngqwara residents, the B.A. Commissioner ruled that the fence be pushed for about two miles into the Ngqwara location commonage. This was beyond the beacons as pointed out by the old men of this location. This came as a surprise even to the residents of Qokolweni, who never anticipated such a move. For their old men were almost in agreement with the Ngqwara people about the whereabouts of the beacons. This has angered the residents of Ngqwara location, who now are seeking ways of having the decision reversed.

The fencing of Qokolweni has been received with mixed reactions by the residents. Recently, the District Authority dealt with an anonymous letter addressed to the T.T.A., complaining that the residents never asked for plantations and dams, which will only serve to reduce their land, but only for a boundary fence. It read,

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in part, literally translated:

As you are aware we accepted the Rehabilitation Scheme voluntarily from the Government for certain reasons and under certain conditions. Amongst these we never asked for cultivation of plantations.

This came as a surprise last year when the Planning Committee pointed out on a Rehabilitation Map (diagram) large tracts of land that were reserved for plantations. We were shocked but we dared not voice our views lest we be branded rebellious against the Government.

The Committee said that the Government was in sympathy with our sad plight of having no firewood.

These Plantations are worthless to the location and a great loss too. We can always gather wood from the plentiful bushes around. What we do not have is arable land and pasture. When we complained about the arable lands that were converted into the commonage to make way for the Rehabilitation Scheme, it was categorically stated that the only solution was reduction of livestock as the pasture would be inadequate.

We beg that the land reserved for plantations be released for commonage, so that some of the land can be used for ploughing. Maintaining the present position would cause the people to be scared of the Rehabilitation Scheme. Because as it is, it is land robbery and forcing people to accept things they never asked for.

Further, neither the Government nor the people benefit from these Plantations. Because even if they are there the people will insist in asking the Government to buy them more land, due to overcrowding in the Location.

We request the District Authority to consider the matter. What we want is more land and not plantations.

TOWARDS THE END of last year chief Vulumhlaba Mrazuli of the Nqabe clan, in grand style, with a posse of about 50 horsemen and some pedestrians came to the B.A. Commissioner to return his people's word that they did not want rehabilitation and fences around their location, Ntlangaza. The reply was that the matter was receiving attention and a communication will be addressed to him in due course.

The officialdom's reaction only manifested itself last

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- Referring to cases of sabotage, Mr. Vorster said: I am responsible for law and order and it is my duty to minimise it as much as I possibly can." —*Digest of South African Affairs*, Department of Information, Pretoria.
- I want second-hand scaffold planks. What do you want?—Swop column, *Rand Daily Mail*.
- 20% discount on all fire-arms purchased during June—Advertisement in *Rand Daily Mail*.
- While we fully understand the importance of what Mr. Wentzel calls "non-violent tactics", and while we appreciate that these are by far the best weapon available to the politically oppressed, we do not choose such methods for ourselves—Dr. Z. J. de Beer in *Forum*.
- Mrs. van der Merwe will be the first woman to stand for Kroonstad. She has no experience of politics but has been associated with the National Party for 25 years—*Rand Daily Mail*.
- R6m Factory Makes World's Whitest Pigment—headline in *Rand Daily Mail*.