

war, according to Sartre and Camus, who were in it, were transformed, even for themselves, into mere gestures by the knowledge that the destiny of France was being settled elsewhere? Certainly I think that South Africa's future, like that of every other nation, will be **largely** determined by outside forces; but at the same time by entering into a dialogue with representatives of some of those forces, she will in turn be able, to some extent, to influence them. What liberals could profitably do is, as they are doing, themselves establish contact with these representatives. At the same time the future of the country will also largely be determined by itself. The only changes which the outside world is virtually unanimous about is that there should be some form of majority rule and that apartheid should be scrapped. On the exact political complexion of any future government there is still room for manoeuvre. Acts can become gestures, but the opposite is also true: acts which seem like gestures to-day can, given the right circumstances, bear positive fruit in the shape of popular support at crucial moments. Far be it from me, who have left the country, to tell those who oppose the government from within what they ought to do; but it seems to me that a good line would be the one

that most of them have adopted already: to go on strenuously opposing apartheid, while welcoming any liberal change, and urging the government to accept the implications for South Africa of its own Bantustan policy. Some of these would be the scrapping of the colour bar for 'foreign' citizens (whoever heard of migrant workers in other countries being denied legal access to hotels and cinemas?), the scrapping of the colour bar for South Africans (if it has to be scrapped for 'foreigners', how can it be justified for one's own citizens?), and the granting of full citizen rights to all those such as the Coloureds and Indians who have no theoretical homeland in which to exercise such rights. For liberals this would, of course, be merely the thin end of the wedge. Nationalists would naturally view the matter differently. From debates of this nature, in any case, debates in which all sections of the population should be encouraged to participate, the lineaments of the Southern Africa of the future may well emerge. As realism grows in those for whom, until recently, liberalism has been equated with utopianism, the day is perhaps not far off when 'REALITY' will be publishing articles written by Nationalists. □

EDENDALE

By: SELBY MSIMANG



The Settlement of Edendale, adjoining Pietermaritzburg, was established in 1851 on the farm Vervordient by the Rev. James Allison and several African members of the Methodist Church. It was subsequently sub-divided and these sub-divisions were transferred in freehold to individual owners. There were sub-divisions which were not allotted and, it is understood, were reserved for future expansion. Mr. Allison also had his sub-division which is where the Edendale Technical School stands today. Owing to certain disputes in the community over the un-allotted sub-divisions the Supreme Court ordered that all un-allotted sub-divisions should be sold to descendants of original buyers. Unfortunately this order coincided with the time

the Pietermaritzburg Corporation had decided to clear out all settlements of unauthorised urbanisation round the perimeter of the city. As usual, no other accommodation had been arranged for the people concerned, who were workers of Pietermaritzburg.

In some underhand way a number of the sub-divisions sold fell into the hands of land speculators. Practically all the people from the slum areas around Pietermaritzburg were accommodated on these plots and, by 1937, Edendale had become the worst slum of all. Property owners formed a Vigilance Committee with the purpose of fighting to bring about order. They soon discovered they would require a

statutory body to tackle a situation as bad as Edendale was. They then petitioned the Government for the establishment of a Village Management Board under the Natives Administration Act of 1927. Their plea was rejected. Instead the Government appointed a Commission of Inquiry whose report was in turn rejected by the Provincial Administration of Natal, which proceeded to pass Ordinance 20 of 1941 establishing the Local Health Commission to administer Edendale. This it did without reference to the local community.

On 30th June, 1942, property owners of Edendale petitioned the Natal Administration seeking direct representation on the Local Health Commission on the ground, inter alia, that Edendale was a freehold settlement and that the Local Health Commission would be obliged to levy rates on their properties, wherewith to effect improvements and developments in the area, and they therefore claimed the right to be involved and to share fully in the administration of the area. The Provincial Executive Committee turned this request down and, by way of justification, informed the petitioners that the Local Health Commission would not have a permanent appointment and that it would serve only for five years, although it might be reappointed for a further period of five years.

What was important, at this time, to the Edendale petitioners was the assurance they were given that the Local Health Commission would introduce techniques for running the administration of an urban area and train the community, so that, when the time came for the disestablishment of the Local Health Commission, the community would take over and manage their own affairs. With that assurance the deputation representing the petitioners agreed to work under an Advisory Board.

After some years this Advisory Board again approached the Provincial Executive Committee praying for an advancement from its advisory position to one of policy making. This, the Board claimed, would be stage number two, which would eventually work up to the stage of decision-making. The Executive Committee pleaded for time, saying that the Government was proposing the creation of Urban Bantu Councils for municipal locations, which they hoped would give them a model on which to meet the wishes of the people of Edendale.

When it became clear that the Urban Bantu Council system could not be applied to Edendale the Provincial Executive Committee did not suggest an alternative which would satisfy the people of Edendale; it simply did nothing. Then, on 12th November 1970, Mr. J. O. Cornell, then Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner for Natal, addressed a public meeting at Edendale at which he read a communication from the Secretary of Bantu Affairs, Pretoria, giving the following assurances by the government on the future of Edendale:

- "a) That the Government does not intend or contemplate disturbing any Bantu owner of land in Edendale in his ownership of the land there;
- b) Edendale is within a 'released' area and Bantu were entitled to buy land and live there;

- c) As many lots in Edendale are too large for proper development on a township basis, any such lots, which have not already been sub-divided and planned properly on a township basis, will be so planned in consultation with the owner, on a proper township basis."

In August 1971 a letter (No. 1/4/3 126/70 dated 22/7/1971) from the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Ladysmith (Mr. H. C. C. Scholtz), relating to an estate which was in the process of being wound up, disclosed the most alarming information that "the whole of the Edendale/Georgetown area is earmarked as a Bantu township and it is therefore necessary that the S. A. Bantu Trust be the sole owner of all properties falling within the proposed area." That shook the confidence of the community in the Government as this was a repudiation of the assurances given in the letter read to the mass meeting by Mr. Cornell. Then, in March, 1972, at a quarterly meeting of the local chiefs the Assistant Bantu Affairs Commissioner conveyed a decision by the Government on the Division of the District of Pietermaritzburg as follows:—

"The Homeland known as Zwartkops Location was extended to include Montrose and the boundary would extend to include Sweetwaters and Willowfontain. Imbali Township would fall within the urban area of Pietermaritzburg while Ashdown would be included with the Bantu homeland as defined. The whole of the area comprising the homeland would come under the jurisdiction of the Zulu Territorial Authority." This area included Edendale. No consultation with its people preceded the announcement.

During 1972 the community also received information that the South African Bantu Trust was negotiating with the Pietermaritzburg Corporation to take over the control and administration of Edendale. The community at once sought confirmation or denial of the rumour—without success. It then requested that a high official of the Department of Bantu Administration be sent to inform it of the true state of affairs with regard to the future of Edendale. There was no reply. It then applied for a copy of a "Master Plan" said to be being prepared for the Department by Town Planning Consultants and providing for a new lay-out for Edendale. No reply came to this application.

In view of the foregoing the community approached the Executive Councillor for KwaZulu Government who organised a meeting between Mr. Cronje, Township and Land Administration Officer for the Department of Bantu Administration, and representatives of Edendale and Clermont (another Local Health Commission area). The meeting was held at Imbali Township on 17th January, 1974. After hearing Mr Cronje the following submissions were made and submitted to him in writing viz:

- a) Lack of faith in Government promises in the light of past experiences.
- b) That when the Local Health Commission is disestablished the community should become actively involved in the determination of policy and administration and control of the affairs of the community.

- c) That the community asks that the administration and control of its area should fall completely under KwaZulu Government.
- d) That in the light of para. (b) hereof and that in the light of past experience gained, the representatives reject the Advisory Board system at any stage of development.
- e) That machinery be established immediately which will operate on an ad hoc basis pending the establishment of a town council, such machinery to involve the community.
- f) That all land acquired by the S. A. Bantu Trust from non-Africans in the area should be resold to Africans and that there is alarm that the Trust is now buying out Africans who own land in the community area.
- g) That if, in the implementation of the Master Plan, certain property owners are displaced, such owners should be compensated by being given other land held by the Trust in the community area, and such land to be of equal value to the land taken.

These representations were ignored by Mr Cronje who proceeded to make regulations for Edendale (and Clermont) providing for just what Edendale had told him it didn't want—an Advisory Board. The definition of its functions precludes all local involvement in the framing of estimates of income and expenditure and decision and policy making. Its status fails completely to recognise property owners even in the matter of the relationship between property owners and tenants.

And now, out of the blue, the Master Plan for the Edendale complex has at last appeared. It came with the Planner, accompanied by the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, the Vulindlela Magistrate and the Town Manager (all White Government officials) on 30th January, 1975. They met the Executive Committee of the Inhlango yabathengi base Edendale and the Advisory Board. The plan is to provide accommodation for 350 000 people within a given period and covers a complex consisting of three "released" and two unreleased areas. The fear that freehold rights are in danger has been completely justified by the new regulations already referred to. There is nothing in them differentiating the status of Africans living on land the property of the S. A. Bantu Trust and Africans who live on land legally acquired and held under a title-deed. These regulations are unmistakably based on the conception that land at

Edendale (and Clermont) is the property of the Trust. As already stated the new Master Plan covers three "released" and two unreleased areas. Four of these areas are to all intents and purposes the property of the Trust, the regulations are intended for these areas, and Edendale finds itself sandwiched in them and treated as not different from the other four. In this way the people of Edendale are in danger of losing their freehold rights. The regulations make no distinction between the different areas within their purview. Consequently Edendale falls in the same category as the other four pieces of land. Her particular status has been overshadowed by the areas with which she has been merged, without consultation, for the purpose of Government policy. Unless this is corrected Edendale is destined to become part of the area set aside for accommodating 350 000 families and the whole valley will become a mass of shanties.

One cannot help seeing a political stance through what has been disclosed by this Master Plan. The Government seeks to honour the 1936 undertaking to reserve 13% of all the land in South Africa for Africans (retaining the other 87% for the small white population). To achieve this it has apparently conceived the grand idea of congregating millions of Africans in closer settlement under conditions unfamiliar and, by African standards, unnatural. It could be a chilling device for hastening demoralisation of the African people. To think of Edendale eventually housing some 25 000 additional families, while at the present moment the population (estimated at 50 000) suffers grave discrimination in access to employment in its natural market, Pietermaritzburg, is unacceptable. Young boys and girls at Edendale are unemployed, and cannot find employment, because of the fact that what employment Pietermaritzburg has, it reserves initially for the people of its own municipal townships, Sobantu and Imbali. When a situation of this kind is persisted in and deliberately encouraged, there certainly must be an escalation in crime and violence, as is the case today.

So, nearly a century and quarter after its creators embarked so hopefully on the founding of what they thought would become a new Eden in Africa, one looks to the future of Edendale with anxiety. And as one looks back at the story of the settlement one thing stands out. It is the high-handedness with which the community has been treated by every white-controlled authority with which it has had to deal since its growing population and social problems first forced them to take an interest in it. From the day that its administration was put into the hands of the Local Health Commission in 1942, until the eventual appearance of the "Master Plan" in 1975, its people have been ruled without consent. □

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