

4.3.3 Update on Mgwali

Mgwali has survived the 1982 parliamentary session which, despite contrary expectations, did not order its removal. The most significant movement in support of the community has come from the synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, which resolved at its 59th general assembly that it

opposes the removal of the stable community of Mgwali and has pledged to do everything within its power to cause this undesirable removal to be cancelled. (DD, 4.10.82)

This strong statement reverses the formerly more equivocal stance of the church, which is the only large landowner in Mgwali. On the other hand, Mr Wilson Fanti, a leading member of the Residents' Committee, was detained in July by the South African Security Police. After some months of uncertainty as to his whereabouts, he has finally appeared in court in Umtata under the Transkei security laws. Details of the charges are not available, and it remains unclear to what extent his arrest is linked with his opposition to the Mgwali removals. (DD, 7.10.82) On 27 October J Oosthuysen, an official of the Department of Co-operation and Development, announced that overall planning on the Mgwali removal had been completed, although details of compensatory land had not been finalised, and there was no timetable for the removal. Oosthuysen reiterated the government standpoint that the notorious 'Planning Committee represents the people of Mgwali', and said that his department was not 'going to start negotiations with other committees'. He did not explain how a committee appointed by the government could be regarded as representative of people who had no hand in choosing it. (DD, 28.10.82)

4.3.4 East London

Our grateful thanks to Eileen Lambie, research officer of the SAIRR Border region, for the following report (November 1982).

DUNCAN VILLAGE

The first known africans to stay in what is now Duncan Village were families who settled on what are now the sports fields in Duncan Village Extn 1. This was in about 1871....

The Duncan Village situation is complex. Part of what remains as Duncan Village is now officially referred to as Braelyn Extn 6, indicating that it is earmarked as a future indian area. This part of Duncan Village has been deproclaimed african but not reproclaimed indian yet. There are now about 498 coloured families living there. The official plan is to rehouse these families in the future Buffalo Flats Extns 2 - 7. The other half of the original Duncan Village area is partially deproclaimed and proclaimed coloured, i.e. the coloured areas of Pefferville, Parkridge, Charles Lloyd, and Charles Lloyd Extn.

The discernible areas of Duncan Village occupied by africans are:

- Duncan Village (or Duncan Village proper). Also referred to as Old Duncan Village. It is bounded by the Duncan Village coloured community of 498 families who fall under the East London municipality, and the coloured areas of Pefferville, Charles Lloyd, and Charles Lloyd Extn.
- Duncan Village Extn No 1. Here there is a group of 972 'site and service' houses with gardens, most of which are leased for 30 years or more - which, it can be argued, amounts virtually to permanent occupation. As yet none have been demolished. They

are better than some of the houses built in Mdantsane in 1973 which are now showing cracks . People here are apparently installing electricity . A lot of africans were moved by the East London municipality from Duncan Village proper to Duncan Village Extn and were told they would not be moved again .

- The Emergency Camp . Originally it had two sections , B and C . People staying in Section B were moved to Mdantsane and Section B was demolished . In Section C there are one- and two-roomed houses built originally with an intended lifespan of 10 years . Section C is now 22 years old . All the houses there are therefore in a poor condition . These houses were in fact the last to be built in Duncan Village , as far back as 1960 , to overcome the congestion then .
- The Ndende Street area . Here there is a mixture of permanent and temporary housing . There are a large number of shacks housing mostly 'illegal' squatters . It is here that the shacks are being numbered and as people are being moved to Mdantsane are being demolished .

There are squatters in the Emergency Camp where there is both municipal-built housing and self-erected 'illegal' squatter house . There are illegal backyard squatters in most cases in Duncan Village proper and Duncan Village Extn - i.e. there is more than one household living on an erf . There are also squatters in the Ndende Street area . Not all the squatters erecting their own dwellings are 'illegals' , though most are .

A respected town planning expert and head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of the OFS stated in a report in 1981 that

... the proposed demolition of Duncan Village eliminates sound housing , destroys private initiative and drives out a stable population . THE SOCIO ECONOMIC COSTS ARE TOO HIGH , WITHOUT ANY MATCHING BENEFITS

COLOURED AND INDIAN HOUSING

Aside from the coloured areas already mentioned , the others are Parkside , Buffalo Flats and Buffalo Flats Extn 1 , none of which were formerly part of Duncan Village . There are official plans to extend Buffalo Flats from Extns 2 - 7 and money has definitely been granted for this . This will cater for 1 000 houses and 901 serviced erven .

In the case of the indian areas , Braelyn Extn 2 was formerly part of Duncan Village . Approximately 110 indian families are still living in another part of East London known as the North End . North End was formerly a mixed area housing all population groups . 17 of the 110 families are relatively recent arrivals from other parts of South Africa . Official plans are that only the older residential families in the North End will be allocated housing in Braelyn Extn 4 . This amounts to 93 of the 110 families mentioned . Braelyn 4 is a new area which is adjacent to the future Braelyn Extn 6 .

Another new area available for both North End and Braelyn 2 residents is Braelyn Extn 5 where there is provision for 73 home ownership plots . About 5 families from North End and Braelyn 2 so far have taken up residence there . Significantly in mid-1982 the East London Housing Action Committee (a ratepayer-type association formed to represent North End residents) , the Indian Management Committee and the Indian Association of East London seemed agreed in a stand that no-one should be forced to move from North End to Braelyn Extn 4 until a specific adjacent area had been upgraded , i.e. the future Braelyn Extn 6 , the part of Duncan Village where the 498 coloured families are living . (DD , 7.06.82)

The adjacent area has not been upgraded but about 59 North End families have moved to Braelyn 4 , possibly in the expectation of improved housing conditions there . When Braelyn 4 is

complete it will make provision for 81 single three-bedroomed houses, perhaps by the end of 1982. All 81 houses have apparently been allocated already. There are plans for more houses to be built in Braelyn 4. Braelyn 4 also makes provision for 37 home-ownership plots. All of these have been sold and at least 4 have occupied houses on them. About 21 North End families are to move to Braelyn 4 by the end of 1982.

There is also a certain amount of internal rehousing occurring in North End itself. For example, if a house in a particular zone has been vacated and is still habitable, another family from a house in a priority demolition zone could be housed there temporarily.

The full development of Braelyn Extn 6 will depend on the rehousing of the 498 coloured families in Buffalo Flats Extns 2 - 7. Braelyn 6 could be developed in perhaps two to three years' time.

Since 1980, 50 North End houses have been demolished by contractors commissioned by the Department of Community Development. As of 10 November 1982 there are 98 houses, 12 flats, and one hostel accommodating 4 families in North End.

4.3.5 Kwelerha

A new plan has been announced in late 1982 for Kwelerha. It came from three sources, all in the month of October: a Co-operation and Development official who visited Kwelerha especially to announce the scheme; from the magistrate in East London; and on the Ciskei side, from the community's own Chief Jongilanga. We understand the plan was finally confirmed again at a tribal authority meeting in Kwelerha on 29 October.

Landowners are to develop their land as much as possible in the next five years. The CNDC will support them with cash grants, seed etc. The people will own everything they produce. They are urged to grow commercial crops along with food for their own households. The only stipulation is that they must sell any produce in the Ciskei (e.g. Mdantsane market) and not in East London.

An agricultural extension officer has already been appointed to the area. If in his opinion a landowner has not 'done justice' to his land after five years, that land will be 'taken away from him' and given (still under tribal tenure) to another member of the community who has not had land.

Altogether the plan suggests now that Kwelerha is not to be cleared for the next few years anyway. The idea of passing land on to others if the present farmers 'fail' is perhaps high-handed, but it does imply that Kwelerha people might be meant to stay on in this area after all. The whole thing is a mystery at present, but this impression is slightly reinforced by a central spokesman being reliably quoted as saying that things were happening which would be a great surprise even to sanguine people. It is also noted that some school building has been done in Kwelerha by the Ciskei Department of Education.

We do not know how many african farmers there are, and if those without land are any safer now than they were before. And does the new scheme extend to Mooiplaats, Kwenxurha and Newlands, all of which also fall under Chief Jongilanga and the Chalumna removal plan?

General feeling in the area in November 1982 is that this part of the 'White Corridor' could be incorporated into the Ciskei. It is argued that local white farmers mostly use their land more as a commuting base and not so much for production, and are therefore not expected to oppose any plan to expropriate them.