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THE HISTORY OF THE MTHIYANE PEOPLE WHO WERE REMOVED FROM
RICHARDS BAY TO NTAMBANANA
WEDNESDAY 6 JANUARY 1976

BY

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PREFACE

Sources which have been consulted for this research are part of the reserved copies taken from the Zululand Observer offices, Empangeni. But unfortunately very little material has been founded there because part of the information is no longer available. As to some scholars or researchers who had been reading it and in that process the material has subsequently disappeared. The research has however, been largely supplemented by oral information collected from various individuals including the Mtiyane people living at Ntambanana, Mandlazini, Oyengweni etc. A few secondary sources were also consulted, for example, 'A History of Richards Bay' by Prof Tony Cubbin.

My intention is to write and research this history as much as possible from the Black perspective. Therefore I have deliberately interviewed these Zulu people who were involved in this forced removal from eMandlazini to Mtambanana in 1976. There is the added consideration that this hurtful event took place some twenty plus years ago and the memory dims through death and failing memories. The sooner this history is recorded the better.

I wish to thank my study leader, Prof Tony Cubbin, of the Department of History at the University of Zululand for his guidance throughout my period of study. I further wish to thank Mr A V Shongwe, lecturer in the History Department, Prof S J. Maphalala, Vice-Dean of the faculty of Arts. These individuals helped me to solve problems during my study. Above all they encouraged me to go on studying history.


My thanks are also due to the following officials:- Mr E Mbatha, the Mayor of Richards Bay, Mphangwa Mthiyane, inkosi of the Mthiyane people; Mr Orbet Mthethwa, the

mouthpiece and the interpreter for inkosi Themba Mthethwa. I have also received assistance from the following students, Jimmy Khumalo, Xolani Nxumalo and Mr Ndlovu. I greatly appreciate their help.

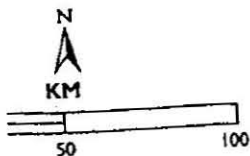
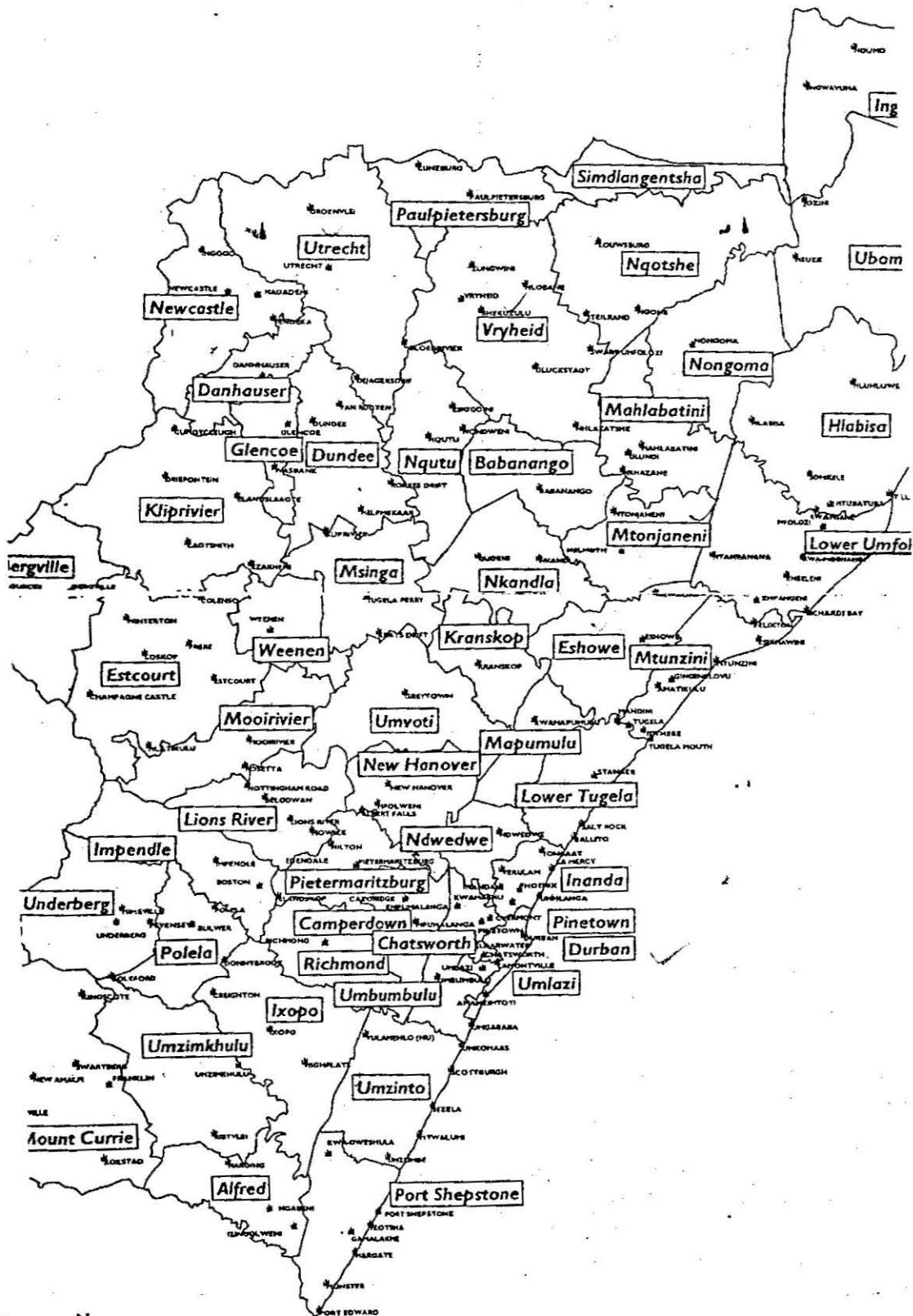
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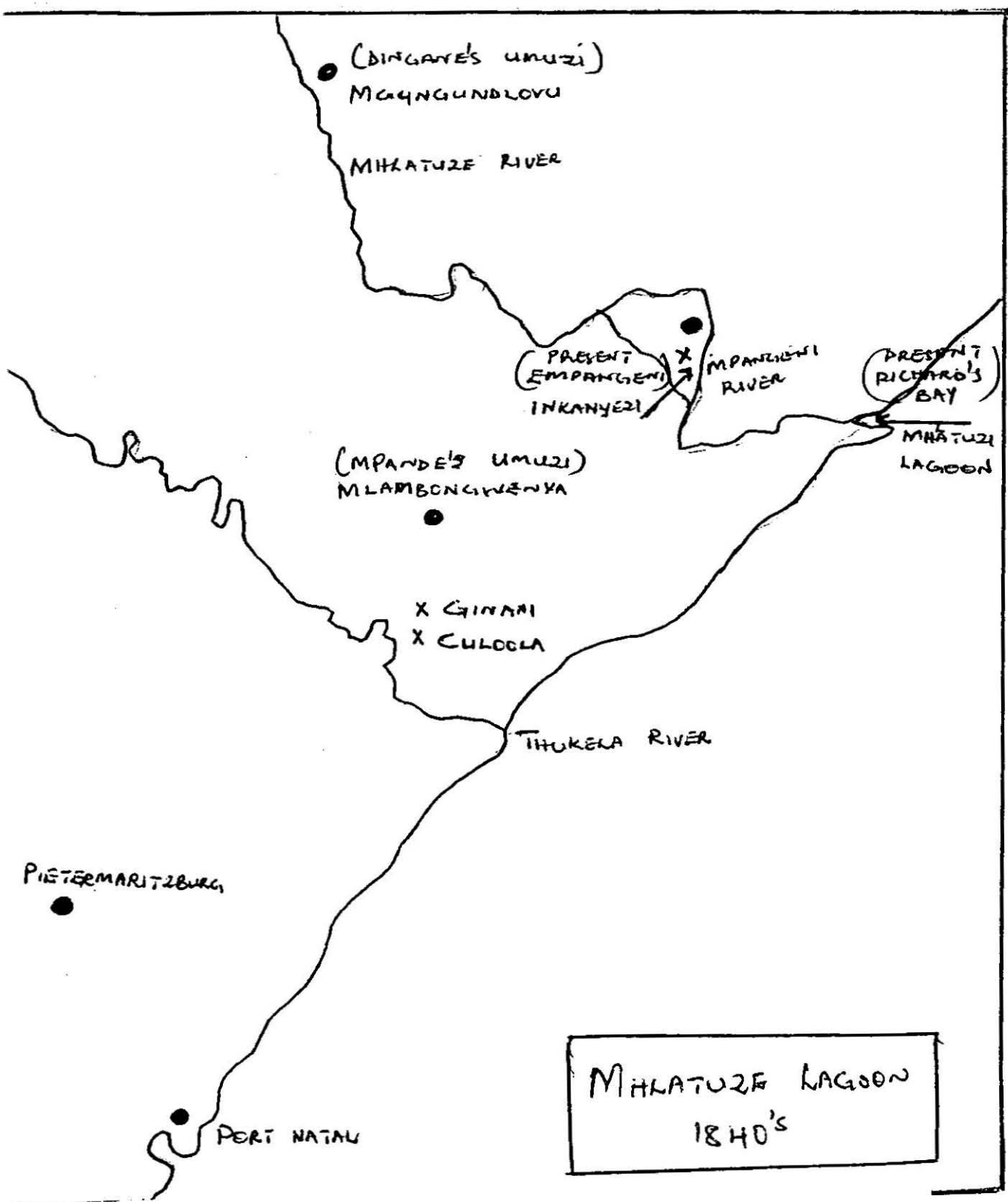
DECLARATION

I, SIHLE HERBERT NTULI DO HEREBY DECLARE THAT THIS RESEARCH PROJECT REPRESENTS MY OWN WORK BOTH IN CONCEPTION AND EXECUTION.

SIGNED:  ON THIS 17th DAY OF NOVEMBER 1998
AT KWADLANGEZWA.

Map showing Magisterial Districts and Towns in KwaZulu-Natal





A MAP DIPICTING THE HLATUZE LAGOON AND OTHER LOCAL AREAS.

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THE HISTORY OF RICHARDS BAY FROM THE BLACK PERSPECTIVE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Shortly after taking the reins of government in May 1948, Prime Minister D F Malan and his National Party Government commenced with the statutory entrenchment of apartheid. By “statutory entrenchment” is meant the solid establishment of apartheid through a series of acts or statutes enacted by parliament.¹ It is noteworthy that the Nationalist Government did not follow a planned legislative programme. A whole variety of bills to regulate apartheid were tabled and passed by parliament in a rather haphazard order.²

Apartheid went beyond separating Black from White. It also entailed a number of things which in the long run affected and disrupted the lives of South Africans, particularly the Black people. The latter were made to feel inferior under the exaggerated superiority of the Whites more especially the Afrikaners. In a nutshell the Black people were to become dehumanised. They were called Natives, Bantu’s or derogatively Kaffirs.

It is interesting to note that among the acts passed by the Union Parliament, there was the Group Areas Act. This Act was regarded as the cornerstone of apartheid because it made provision for the physical separation of various ethnic groups.³ In terms of this act, residential apartheid was forced upon many ethnically differing communities.

To implement the Group Areas Act successfully, the Government decided to embark on a very brutal and unacceptable concept or method, namely “Forced Removal”⁴ According to this policy the inhabitants were forced to leave their original places of residence where

¹ A.J. Christopher: The Atlas of apartheid, p.2

² Ibid, p.4

³ Y.Muthien: State and Resistance in South Africa, p.7.

⁴ A.J. Christopher: The Atlas of Apartheid, p.14.

they had been living in peace and happiness for many years, and settle elsewhere. It was very common that these people were removed to inhospitable, arid land, where they could not even till the soil. It is also important to note that no one had the right to resist the instruction from the Government who controlled the South African Police and Army. This “forced removal drastically affected and in some cases, disrupted the lives of many, many Africans.

The National Party Government had supreme and unlimited powers. Through ‘forced removal’ people were obliged to leave their homes for various reasons including town development for Whites, establishment of industries for Whites and construction of infra-structures for Whites etc. As pointed out above, this disrupted and traumatised the lives of Africans or Black people, but nothing mattered as long as the State achieved its goals of entrenching White supremacy in South Africa. Economic potentials of some Black areas also led to the removal of the Black people. Hence the State had to gain a lot from these forced removals (the National Party planned somewhat enlarged areas which would accommodate people who had been removed). Relatively very few Whites were touched by these measures.

Against the broad background of the above, this paper seeks specifically to analyse the history of the people who were forcibly removed from the present day Richards Bay (previously called Mhlathuze Lagoon,) to the arid land of Ntambanana. The Paper will concentrate on the experience endured by these people⁵ during this unfortunate episode. The experience entailed difficulties, deaths, hunger, resistance and even in some cases

⁵ P.Rich: State Power and Black Resistance in South Africa. p.41.

willingness or happiness, homelessness etc. It is also interesting to indicate that the Group Areas Act, which strongly manifested itself through force removal was forcefully implemented in moving the original inhabitants of Richards Bay.

2. THE ORIGINAL ZULU NAMES FOR RICHARDS BAY

It is appropriate that one examines the original African nomenclature of this region as a starting point to this study. As far as I can ascertain that are three, namely Echwebeni, Mandlazini and Kwa-Bhuquza.

ECHWEBENI

It has been argued by many local students from Universities & Colleges that the original name for Richards Bay is not 'Mandlazini' but 'Echwebeni'. Ichweba is a Zulu name or word referring to a bay, lake, or lagoon. According to this view, the first group of people, Mthiyane, who resided in this area called it Ichweba. The history of this word dates back to the period before the birth of Mandlazini. It is therefore possibly that the original name for Richards Bay is indeed Echwebeni.

MANDLAZINI

Before the establishment of the modern town of Richard Bay, the area north of the Mhlathuze lagoon was under the leadership of inkosi uMthiyane. Mandlazini was one of the ancestors of the Mthiyane people. Mphangwa Mthiyane the present impi, maintains that Mandlazini was the brother of Mbonambi; both were the sons of Mthiyane. Mandlazini grew up as a strong and a brave man. He used to fight and defeat his playmates or friends, consequently they regarded him as a “cruel” person. At the age of 22, he was already regarded as a leader and was respected by many people.

Twelve years later, Mandlazini played a dominant and a pivotal role during the founding and development of Mthiyane clan. He was both a skilful and respected person. The Mthiyane people regarded him as their great hero but, in addition to this he was their leading intellectual. It was based on these grounds that, after the establishment of Mthiyane chiefdom under the leadership of Mandlazini, the region in which they lived was named after him.

KWABHUQUZA

This name is also associated with Richards Bay. It emanated from the verb “bhuzuza” meaning to lurch like a beheaded chicken. The other possible meaning is to ‘sand bathe or lurch around like a drunk person ? This name originated after the death of Muti Mthiyane. Muti was one among the Alusaf (Bay-Side) workers who was residing at ‘inkopholo’ (informal settlement) near Richards Bay C.B.D. It was their normal practice that, during

their leisure time, they used to sit together and drink some beers. It was during one such gathering that one of Muti's colleagues fatally stabbed him. From then the place of residence in which Muti was residing was named Kwa-Bhuquza. The new name became very popular, consequently it was extended to the area around Alusaf, Bayside. There is also a belief that the name was given to those people who, under the influence of liquor, would stagger that Muti left his wife and two sons.

3. A BRIEF BACKGROUND OF THE MTHIYANE PEOPLE

As pointed out above, this is a clan of Zulu origin. They are Zulu language speakers, and practice the Zulu culture. During early 1970's many of them were illiterate. They were dependant upon agriculture and stock farming as a means of living. The Mandlazni area easily supported this way of life. The 'abanumzane' (head of the clan) had large herds of cattle. Polygamy, which was allowed by their church (Shembe) was common. Zulu ancestor worship was also practised. The green pastures around the Mzingazi lake supported their herds of cattle. The inkosi was highly respected. The principle of 'Ubuntu' (humanity) formed the basis of their culture. As was pointed out above, people who had passed away, were highly respected and were taken as mediators between them and 'Umvelinqanyi' (God). So the Mthiyane people lived an idyllic, prosperous life and the last thing that they would have desired was to have their life disrupted. The economic potential of this area made Mandlazini a vineyard (Bible 1 King 21: 1-16).



**MPHANGWA MTHIYANE, 79 YEARS OLD,
SITTING AT HIS HOMESTEAD DURING
THE TIME OF THE INTERVIEW.**



**MPHANGWA MTHIYANE AND SIHLE NTULI
AFTER THE INTERVIEW.**



**MPHANGWA MTHIYANE AND
MR SIHLE NTULI, A RESEARCHER
AT MPHANGWA'S HOMESTEAD**



**MPHANGWA SHOWING
MR NTULI THE BOUNDARIE
OF HIS LAND,
NTAMBANANA.**



INKOSI UMPHANGWA MTHIYANE AND HIS WIVES

A MAP DIPICTING A ROAD FROM MANDLAZINI TO NTAMBANANA

LOT 273

NTAMBANANA

• MACLEANE

■ SMPANGENI

LOT 280

• NGWELANE

• NUBAYANE

• FALINTO

LAKE
MUNGABI

RICHARDS BAY
HARBOR

■ RICHARDS BAY

4. THE FORCED REMOVAL OF THE ZULU PEOPLE FROM RICHARDS BAY

The Imperial government's recognition of the need for coal deposit on the south eastern shores of Africa and for a viable British harbour north of the Thukela prompted them to send L.B. Denham, assisted by L.M. Altern, the government surveyor for the lower Umfolozi, to conduct a detailed hydrological and marine survey of the Mhlathuze lagoon and its troublesome bar in 1897.⁶ It was The Zululand Port Survey by Cathcart Methven, the harbour engineer of the Natal Government in 1902 that really drew attention to the potential of Richards Bay as a new harbour for S.E. Africa.

This, in the long run, resulted in the founding of the modern harbour which played a dominant role in the removal of the Mthiyane people from the area, the removal of 6000 people and their 3000 head of cattle to a reserve in Ntambamana.⁷ This removal was one of the largest undertakings in creating the harbour at Richards Bay. This forced removal was expected to be completed before the harbour was formally opened by the Prime Minister, B.J. Vorster on 1 April 1976.⁸

In April 1965, the Industrial Development Corporation had invited Swiss Aluminium smelter to investigate the feasibility of an aluminium smelter in South Africa.⁹ An agreement for the construction of the smelter by Alusaf was concluded in Johannesburg in 1966. In June 1967 the government announced that the smelter would be erected at Richards Bay.

⁶ A.E. Cubbin : A History of Richards Bay 1497-1970's p. 38

⁷ Zululand Observer, 27.02.1976. p.2

⁸ Ibid. p.3

⁹ A.E. Cubbin: A History of Richards Bay 1497-1970's p.34

The natural resources at Richards Bay, in particular the availability of sufficient water, made the site ideally suitable for the needs of an aluminium smelter. The construction of the plant began in January 1969.¹⁰ Due to swampy area a very huge portion of the 117 hectare site had to be filled to approximately six metres above sea level. The volume of earth which had to be moved totalled approximately 2.1 million cubic metres.¹¹

It was necessary to erect a fresh water pump station at Mzingazi Lake about 6 kilometres from the site of the (aluminium smelter), as well as the sea - water pump station which was originally situated on the shores of the bay to be moved subsequently to the Manzanyma canal on the eastern border of the site. This project demanded that local African people be moved to settle elsewhere. As the first industrial giant of the harbour, Alusaf earned Richards Bay the title of "Aluminium city with the golden future".¹²

On a rainy autumn day in 1965, Transport Minister Ben Schoeman announced that he had "no hesitation in choosing Richards Bay as the country's next major harbour"¹³ Zululand's great leap forward had begun. Speculators swarmed in only to find that the Government had named Richards Bay and environs 'a controlled area' where land could not be sub-divided for sale nor its use changed.¹⁴

4.1 MEASURES TAKEN BY THE NATIONAL PARTY GOVERNMENT : TINY JORDAAN MEETS INKOSI MAHANGWA MTHIYANE

¹⁰ A.E. Cubbin A History of Richards Bay. 1497-1970's p.38

¹¹ Zululand Observer 27.2.1976. p.7.

¹² Ibid, p.9.

¹³ Zululand Observer 27.2.1976, p.8

¹⁴ Ibid, p.9

The above paragraph vividly explains government's interest in the Mandlazini (Richards Bay) area. Emanating from this motivation, Mr Tiny Jordaan, Empangeni's Bantu affairs Commissioner, was empowered by the National Party government to give orders regarding people who were to be removed from Mandlazini.¹⁵ At first Mr Jordaan had a meeting with inkosi Mphangwa Mthiyane. Mr Jordaan did not treat Mphangwa with respect hence he didn't follow the lawful procedures e.g. he was smoking while talking to inkosi. Nevertheless in their meeting, Jordaan delivered the Draconian instructions from the National Party Government. According to these instructions, the inkosi was to act as the co-ordinator between his people and the Government. On behalf of the apartheid government Mr Jordaan gave the following orders to be carried out by force: Firstly on 27 December 1975, Mr Jordaan informed Mphangwa that within a period of ten days he (inkosi) and his people were to be moved from Mandlazini to Ntambanana. Secondly the Government would provide transport, both for the people and their property. Thirdly, no one had the right to oppose this under the apartheid policy of the National party government.¹⁶

Besides these demands, Jordaan offered number of promises, including rewards for quick positive response. The Government was prepared to refund people for their fields, forests, homes, etc. As an Afrikaner, Jordaan could not understand Zulu properly nor reply correctly so he could not communicate accurately with the Zulu people. He was therefore helped by his secretary, Ernest 'Mfishane' Nxumalo. The delegation from the Government was protected and escorted by South African Police (SAP) and South

¹⁵ Ibid, p.11

¹⁶ Zululand Observer 04.01.1976, p.4

African soldiers paid by the South African tax payers. It is also interesting to indicate that even before the meeting of Mphangwa and Jordaan, a number of armed policemen, together with soldiers, were seen around Mandlazini. This awakened the local people to the impending threat.¹⁷

4.2 JORDAAN'S PROMISES ABOUT NTAMBANANA

As the government spokesman, Tiny Jordaan laid down the following:- It was the duty and responsibility for the government to provide houses at Ntambanana. Secondly, for a period of one month, people would be getting food freely, thirdly, schools, clinics, dams, roads, and community halls were to be constructed. Fourthly the Government would provide enough transport throughout the day. Local shops or supermarkets were to be built. Black farmers were to be acquainted with new scientific farming methods, scientific machines etc. were to be provided free, by the government. Young children, pregnant wives and adults of more than 50 years would attend free clinics. A local police station with adequate policemen was to be constructed. Playgrounds, including soccer fields and netball fields, were to be constructed. Over and above these, the Government would provide enough grazing pastures for cattle, goats and sheep etc.¹⁸ A huge dam was to be constructed.

Mphangwa Mthinyane pointed out that the area where Mthinyane people were to reside had previously belonged to the Boers.

¹⁷ Ibid. 10.1.1976, p. 3

¹⁸ Zululand Observer 4.1.1976, p.6

5. THE MTHIYANE PEOPLE'S RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S MEASURES AND THE RESISTANCE BY MPHANGWA AND HIS PEOPLE.

Before one can embark on discussing the people's feelings, it is vitally important to give a brief summary of inkosi (Mphangwa) and his family. Mphangwa Mthiyane was born on 6 June 1919. His place of birth was Mandlazini. He was married to 14 wives. Excluding nine children who died, Mphangwa had 49 children, 20 daughters and 29 sons. He worshipped in the Shembe church.

Mphangwa was not educated. He grew up looking after his father's cattle. He was soft and tender. At the time of writing, Mphangwa was an old man of about 79 years of age but the spirit of Africanism (people of Africa should unite and fight against all forms of colonialism) still prevails in his mind. Quite often, Mphangwa talks of the evils of subjugation, segregation and discrimination emanating from the obnoxious apartheid system.

Responding to Tiny Jordaan, Mphangwa and his people objected to the instructions imposed by the government without consultation with the Zulu people.¹⁹

As an Nkosi, he was not prepared to sell or alienate his peoples and his fore-fathers land. Consequently Mphangwa opposed and condemned the demands. Jordaan warned the illiterate Mphangwa that it was illegal to resist Government's instructions. But despite this threat, Mphangwa did not yield. In short he was not to be intimidated by this government official. People supported their I and iNkosi, neighbouring amakhosi also supported him.

¹⁹ Ibid 10.1.1976, p.3



CHILD, tired out by moving operations, sleeps next to his new home.



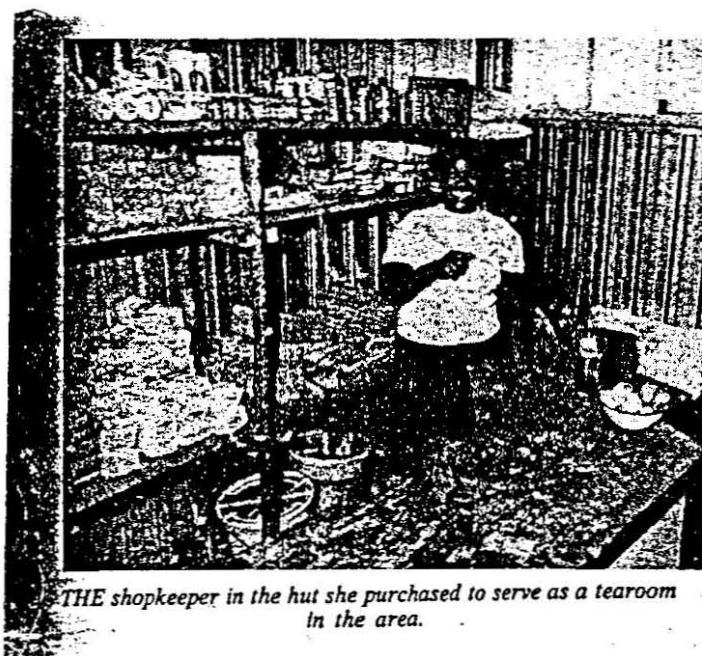
AFRICANS from Richards bay at Empangeni law courts organising a truck for their "big move".



TEMPORARY shop in the new area — a Government pre-fab from back with the owner's new house and new car in the background.



**MTHIYANE PEOPLE SHOWING
RITY AFTER THE BULLDOZERS
STROYED THEIR HOUSES.**



*THE shopkeeper in the hut she purchased to serve as a tearoom
in the area.*



**THE MTHIYANE PEOPLE SHOUTING
SLOGANS DURING THE TIME OF THE
FORCED REMOVAL.**

6. THE BEGINNING OF THE PROCESS OF MOVING FROM EMANDLANZINI TO NTAMBANANA

The de-colonisation of Africa in the early 1960's led apartheid theoreticians to seek a way to harness the cry for independence to preserve White power in Southern Africa.²⁰ The result was the key plan to transform the country's existing African areas into independent homeland states in which Africans would exercise full political rights. All that was needed was the will and the money to put the plan into operation, a massive example of social manipulation that seemed to bring the ultimate dream of apartheid within reach at last of an Afrikaner-run republic with in the words of one time cabinet Minister, Connie Mulder, "No more Black (African) South Africans"²¹

A 45 years of age , Bhekinkosi Dube had lived at Mandlazini since birth. He was working for a White man as a gardener while his family grew in size from 8 children to 15. They had enough food to eat and were friendly with their neighbours²² He tells the story of when

Then a khaki-suited man (Mr Jordaan) of Empangeni Bantu Administration Board arrived and told him that they were going to be moved to a place called Ntambanana. This also happened to other neighbours. e.g. T.T. Mbuyazi, Ambrose Mthikhulu, Jamison Mbuyazi etc. The people of Mandlazini, however decided they would rather stay where they were than move to an unknown destination despite promises of free homes and work at one of

²⁰ E. Bissell (ed) South Africa into the 1980's, p.13

²¹ Ibid, p.17

²² Zululand Observer, 10.01.1976

the many industries supposedly to be established at Ntambanana.²³ For days the fear of removal hung heavy over emandlanzini and then, almost without warning, the penultimate blow fell. In five days, they were told the Government lorries would come and take them away.

The axe fell at dawn, Wednesday 6 January 1976, the Bantu Administration Board men supported by South African Police, shouted at the residents to get out of their homes, while demolition teams went to work in the systematic destruction of their houses that had stood and sheltered them for years.²⁴ The lorries came very early in the morning - Wednesday, 6 January, 1976, while people were still asleep. Within seconds pandemonium was spreading through the small African community of Mthiyane people, jolted from its sleep, as a dreadful and apprehensive cries came from house to house. The dreaded governments trucks had arrived.²⁵

Bulldozers were used to obliterate their houses²⁶ Some of the residents scrambled for their fearful livestock while others tried to rescue their furniture. Some houses were demolished before the contents could be removed. Many residents lost everything. Finally, after the dust and the shouting had subsided, the convoy was ready. Some men rode on the back of the trucks hanging onto their few belongings they had been able to save. Buses were provided for women and children.²⁷

After a long, pitiless, journey during which people wept unashamedly, they reached Ntambanana. The buses and trucks were unloaded and each family given a tiny three-

²³ Zululand Observer 10.01.1976. p.4

²⁴ Ibid. p.6

²⁵ Ibid. 10.01.1976 p.10.

²⁶ Ibid. p.11

²⁷ Ibid. p.12

roomed wooden home with a mud floor and asbestos roof. Many of these structures were so draughty that the new inhabitants had to fill up the cracks with mud. Dazed and bewildered they moved their broken furniture into their new residences. Wondering what they had done to deserve such humiliating treatment in the country of their forefathers.²⁸

For 65 year old Themba Mthiyane, Wednesday 6 January, 1976 was the worst nightmare imaginable, something so incomprehensible that years later he still shook his head at the horrific memory of it. How could a man be forced to leave his house, his work and his friends? The only explanation he could think of was the extra-ordinary one that he was not really a man in KwaZulu at all ! Yet the old man was just one of an estimated 3,5 million people who were forced to move in one of the most ruthless and widespread examples of social engineering in the recent history of South Africa.²⁹

Hardly any African was safe as the planners of the diabolical policy of apartheid bulldozed their way through established settlements driving victims from their ancestral lands and disrupting meaningful but fragile urban and rural economies. Despite a chorus of international outrage, this heartless policy remained in place for more than six months, during which time big numbers of people were the victims of forced removal. In this period according to an estimate by the South African Institute of Race Relations. at least 1,820,000 Africans were removed from their homes or ordered out of urban areas, while a further 600 000 Coloured, Indians and Chinese people and nearly 40 000 Whites were moved in terms of Group Areas Act.³⁰

²⁸ Zululand Observer 27.02.1976 p.9

²⁹ Ibid. p.11

³⁰ E. Bissell: South Africa into the 1980's p.44

Thoroughly alarmed and traumatised, the Mandlazi people decided to stand firm. They organised the Mandlazi Protest Committee and planned a one day work stoppage on (the day on which the removals were due to start. Forewarned, the Government moved two days early and deployed 2,000 Police armed with machine guns, rifles and knobkerries. The eMandlazi community had no answer to this show of force and the first 110 families reluctantly moved to Ntambanana on Wednesday 6 January 1976.

One of them, Thembi Sokhulu, then a teacher at the local school, remembers the day on which they came for her. On Wednesday 6 January, 1976 at half past five in the morning. There were five White men rattling the gate and shouting in Afrikaans "Maak julle oop! (Open up!) Her husband, preparing to go to work, watched in horror as two lorries pulled up outside the house. Before we had even opened the front door, I just heard the hammer on the pillar of the veranda,.. a big sound that made me wonder if I was dying. That sound went right into my heart and I shall never forget it. The police told Solomon (Thembi's husband), "Whether you like it or not, you are going.... cool down and take your things. We had to take everything and throw it outside.³¹ Imagine us taking our washing just as it was, a chair just as it was, that's how they removed us.... I felt such pity for my husband..... because he had built that house with his own bare hands. That house was our own home and our little kingdom. We had freedom there in Mandlazi and that day I felt we were losing our rights and human dignity. Our friends in the community and the old spirit of people I lived with and valued.

Finally everything was piled into the lorries and a car took Thembi and her baby to Ntambanana, and dumped her at her unwanted new address. She felt a stranger in this

³¹ Zululand Observer 10.3.1976, p.11

structure which was very cold, with no middle doors, only the outside doors. These structures were put together like trains.

The Zululand Observer reporter took a walk through Mandlazini after the bulldozers had moved in. 'It looks like a bombed city, the few citizens who remain are hounded out of their houses for not possessing permits hundreds sleep on veranda's, live with friends and in the ruins and the rains are coming' Today, the land that once throbbed to the rhythm of African jive are neat suburbs of modern houses occupied by White people and Indian and Coloureds. The area they live in now is called Birdswood, Wildenwiede, Brackenham, Aquadene, Meerensee, Arboretum, Veldenvlei etc. They were situated on the lovely land that the Nationalist Government had mercilessly robbed the Africans of that fateful morning of Wednesday 6 January 1976. The local Afrikaners were very happy about this. One of them stated quite clearly : 'It must be clear that the Governments policy is being carried out' He even went further" "If Whites cannot remove the Bantu from Mandlazini, our apartheid policy will never succeed" ³²

Some people totally refused to go to Ntambanana. consequently new squatter communities sprang up at places such as near Alusaf. ³³ In 1976 the law against squatters was amended to allow the Bantu Administration Board official to post an eviction order seven days before the demolition of these dwellings. In addition, no landowner could allow squatters on his land without official approval. A month later, after a long battle, all restraint was removed with the passing of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, which made it possible to flatten a dwelling without any prior notice whatsoever ever - unless the

³² Ibid. 10.3.1976. p.4

³³ Ibid p.7

occupier could prove he had little title to the land on which he stood (Africans were not allowed to own land near urban areas)³⁴

The people who squatted around Richards Bay were regarded as illegal families. Despite promises of solidarity, residents began dismantling their dwellings. A yellow front-end loader arrived, escorted by the SAP who announced that demolitions would begin in 15 minutes. Chaos broke out as the squatters ran for their possessions, carrying them towards the road. Their private lives were displayed for all to see. They felt the shame of this violent, aggressive treatment.³⁵ Then the front-end loader lurched mercilessly into action, lifting a shanty into the air and dropping it in a pile of crumpled corrugated iron and wooden beams. Again and again it went onto demolish ten more before becoming stuck in the mud. A tractor sent to pull it out also became stuck in the mud. The sullen and traumatised crowd watched and jeered.³⁶

On Thursday 7 January 1976, dawned cold and overcast, and the SAP and municipal officials set to work with a destructive will. First they checked that the shanties were free of booby-traps (some were rumoured to have holes dug beneath them) and then the front-end loader moved in relentlessly. By that afternoon tensions were rising and people began to arm themselves with stones, bottles broken glass and knives. They faced the SAP who were armed with guns, clubs and dogs. Within seconds, Mansizwa Mbuyazi raised his knobkerrie and rushed at a SAP member. A major outbreak of violence was prevented by the intervention of local induna, A.Mbuyazi who appealed for calm

³⁴ *Ibid* p.9

³⁵ *Zululand Observer* 10.3.1976. p.11

³⁶ *Ibid*, p.12

No sooner had the crowd dispersed than a fire broke out whether by accident or design was unclear. It covered the camp with smoke and mingled with the teargas fired by police in order to break up minor skirmishes. The night was long and hard as thousands of homeless residents tried to shelter under plastic sheeting donated by churches (Roman Catholic Church, Lutheran Church etc) and other groups.

The next afternoon, Friday 8 January, 1976, while a north westerly storm battered what remained of the area, fires again broke out as two front-end loaders arrived. As the trucks moved in, a church man with a long record of helping the Mthiyane people suddenly lay down in front of the first truck. He was quickly arrested. As the afternoon wore on, the officials worked quickly and efficiently, smashing shack after shack until nearly all had been destroyed.

It is interesting to note that, at first the Mthiyane people living on the South-eastern side of the Mzingazi lake were not affected. With the south-western side demolished, the bulldozers then turned their attention to south-eastern side. In that area, a church worker, Nelly Sokhulu who walked in front of the Police with a white cross held high in her hand, was arrested.

The Government justified itself that the forceful removal of the Mthiyane people from Mandlazini to Ntambanana would be the advantage for the entire nation because the development would include the construction of industries which would create job opportunities for all elements of South African societies.

Over the next few months, thousands of the Mthiyane people who had once lived at Mandlazini gradually dispersed.

It is strongly believed that the “divide and rule” system was again applied at Mandlazini. Mpangazitha Sibiya maintains that there were some local people who actually received money from Tiny Jordaan so that they would betray their brothers. When supporting this view, Mpangazitha pointed out that two strong leaders, Mveli and Zakhele, (who objected the movement) were identified and arrested before the bulldozers came in. They were regarded as troublemakers.³⁷

It is noteworthy to indicate that before this the forced removal a Government delegation from Pietermaritzburg under the leadership of Gert Hanekom and Charol Walker arrived at Mandlazini. After long talks, the negotiation became a failure. Hanekom’s demands were not accepted by Mphangwa. In those talks the issue of the graves (amathuna) of their ancestors was high on the agenda. Mphangwa insisted that it was virtually impossible for the Mthiyane people to leave their forefathers’ remains and graves there.³⁸ Hanekom responded by stating that graves would be exhumed so that the remains would be buried somewhere else. Moreover he promised a goat and a cow for each grave as a compensation. Mpiyeza Mthiyane stated that his father had been buried two weeks before the bulldozers came in. His father was buried at Sabakwe (Emabhanoyini) Reserve 4. It is also interesting to note that where present airport located, was the site for Shembe temple. This experience was to create suspicion and enmity among the Zulu community.

Some Zulu people believed that the Amakhosi were aligning with the government. This view is supported by Zwelihle who strongly condemned the actions taken by Nkosi Mbuyazi (the neighbouring iNkosi). According to Zwelihle, Mbuyazi went to Ulundi to

³⁷ Zululand Observer, 10.3.1976, p.8

³⁸ M. Mthiyane: Oral Evidence, 8 July 1998

report the case immediately after Mr Jordaan had made his demands. But it was not until the day Tiny Jordaan and his bulldozers came in that the Mthiyane people knew that some fellow Africans were spying.

Madoda Xulu maintains that Enerst Mfishane Nxumalo, Jordaan's secretary, pinned red stickers on all the houses to be removed. The stickers were to identify all the houses to be removed.

After being discouraged to negotiate with the lawyers regarding the issue, Mphangwa decided to report the case to the Magistrate, Empangeni court. Immediately Khanya from Ndlunkulu was sent to Mandlazini. What is embarrassing is the fact that Khanya warned the Mthiyane people that they should guard against defying the National Party Government's instructions. Mphangwa pointed out that his father's grave (Makati) was removed for the construction of a railway, long before Jordaan stepped in. He continued saying , where suburbs e.g. Veld en vlei, Aboretum etc, are located was the grazing veld for their cattle and goats. Even the site where Alusaf is located had been previously their soccer field.³⁹ Mphangwa also pointed out that during the reign of his father (Makati) the government tried to remove the Mthiyane people from the area. Makati resisted successfully. Mphangwa affirmed that the area rightfully belonged to the Mthiyane people because they were given the land by the Zulu King, Cetshwayo. He declared that they were the neighbours of the Bhejane (presently called Nseleni) clan. Even the present Empangeni particularly the station and the area before Mhlathuze river rightfully belong to the Mthiyane people.

³⁹ M.Mbuyazi : Oral Evidence , 16 July 1998

The other group, under the leadership of Mtholene Mbonambi (neighbouring iNduna) was also removed from eThuneni (neighbouring territory). According to the Zululand Observer, of 27 February 1976, the Africans, the inhabitants of Reserve Six began moving to make the way for industrial development in the area. According to this article an estimated 90 loads of household effects had been moved daily by a fleet of 60 trucks. Mr Tiny Jordaan was of the strange opinion that: "Nobody has been forced to go, we let the people move at their own speed. Those who doubt the development in the new area near Ntambanana are taken by bus from Richards Bay and shown the new reserve. Most are then eager to move. "Reserve Six, a 10 000 hectare area, stretches from Richards Bay along the coast towards Kwa-Mbonambi and inland along the John Ross Highway towards Empangeni.⁴⁰ A great deal of this land is swampy, and unsuitable for cultivation while all land in the new area is suitable for growing maize and other subsistence crops". This view was held by the Zululand Observer.

The new areas, also 10 000 hectares in extent, were formerly the property of eight White farmers but had been proclaimed an African area. The entire area, although hilly, was prepared for cultivation by the authorities at a cost of R25 000 before the new inhabitants arrived. Three old farm homesteads in the new reserve were allocated for use by the new community.

According to the Zululand Observer of April 1, 1976, one house was occupied by the Chief and the other by the Chief Councillor. The third was for community use and was being turned into a small hospital and a day clinic with eight beds for overnight patients.

⁴⁰ Zululand Observer 27.2.76, p.4

Staff from Ngwelezane hospital had taken charge of the project and a full time nursing sister was to be appointed when the hospital was fully operational.⁴¹

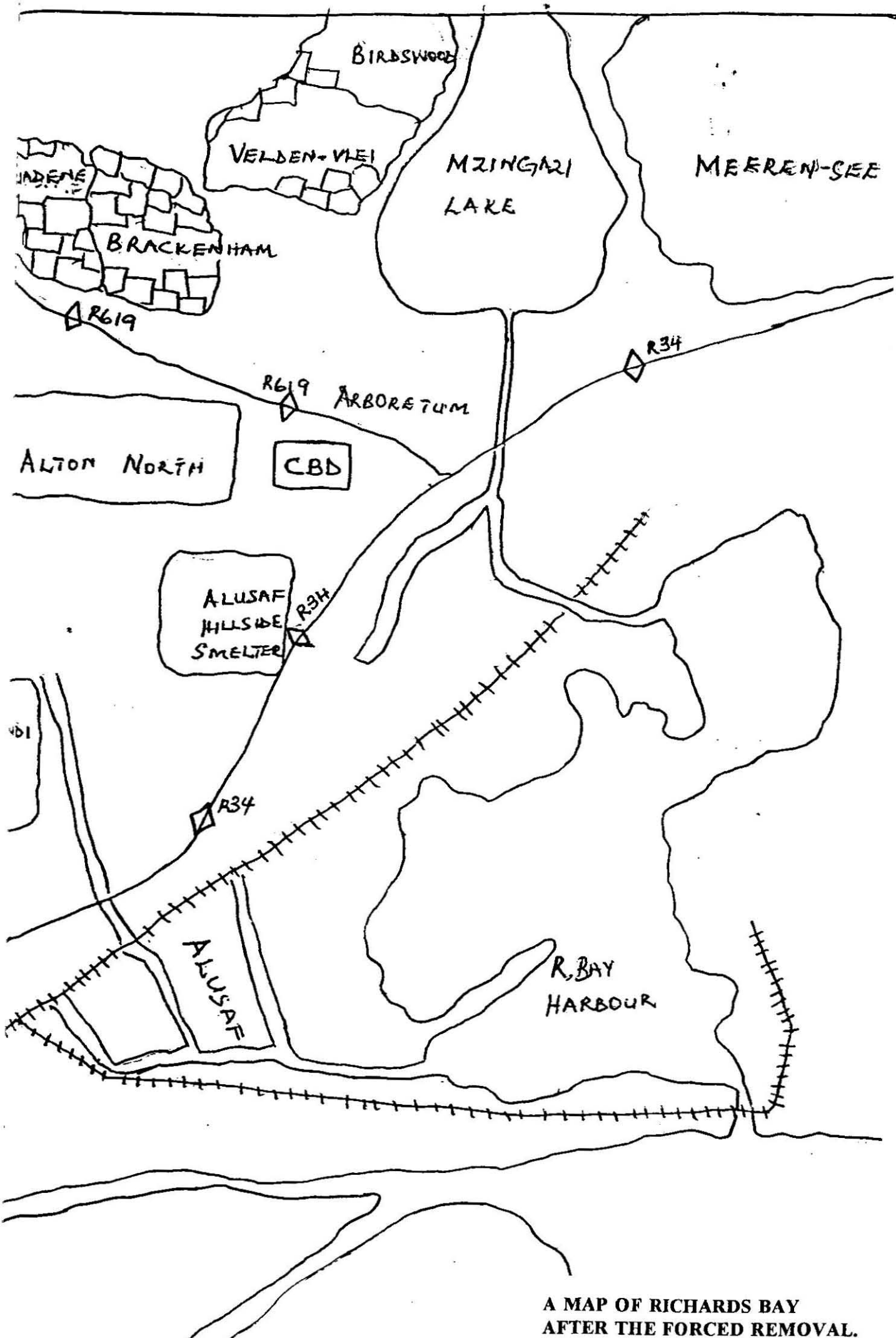
"We have not changed their tribal traditions", Mr Jordaan emphasised, "merely improved their way of living" On arrival at the site each family took occupation of a temporary structure and received three days free rations while they constructed their kraals nearby. The prefabricated huts were also available for purchase at R100 each by new residents. One enterprising owner turned her newly acquired property into a shop.⁴²

The educational needs of children were not neglected and temporary school for 500 pupils was in operation until brick buildings for 1000 students were completed. One of the major problems encountered by the developers of the reserve was the supply of water to residents scattered throughout the arid and hilly region. A weir was constructed across the Enseleni river and the water piped through three pump houses to five hilltop reservoirs. Forty kilometres of pipes from each reservoir fed a network of taps centrally situated near each group of dwellings. In addition, two water tankers were constantly on standby to supply water in time of emergency. Although the workers now had further to travel to reach work in the industrial centres of Empangeni, and ironically Richards Bay, a subsidised bus service to major centres was being planned and a bus terminus built.

7: COMPARISONS BETWEEN MANDLAZINI AND NTAMBANANA

⁴¹ Ibid., 27.2.1976, p.12

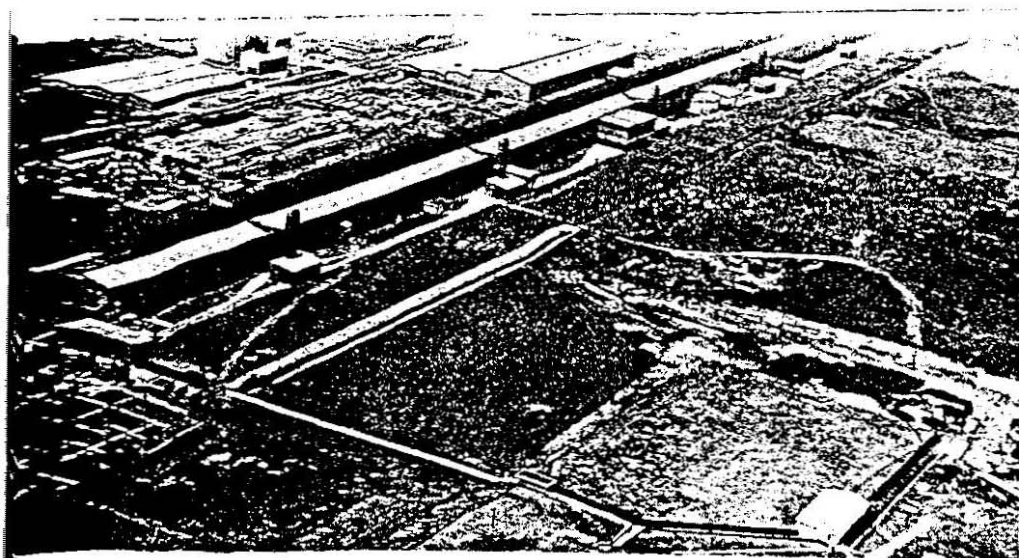
⁴² Ibid., p.13



A MAP OF RICHARDS BAY
AFTER THE FORCED REMOVAL.



The timber is ready, but the mills won't take it. This is the complaint from these small growers who met at Mandlazini on Monday (left): Sipho Ndunakazi (Esikhawini), Selby Mthiyane (Mandlazini/Kwambo), James Shange (Nseleni), M.J Cele (Esikhawini) and Z Dlamini (Empembeni)



ALUSAF — the R80 000 000 aluminium reduction plant at Richards Bay.

There is a vast difference between these two areas. The fact that Mandlazini is adjacent to the coast and Ntambanana is in the interior, is a basic difference. Whereas in Mandlazini there is the great Mzingazi lake supporting the entire community with clean fresh water, in the arid Ntambanana region there is no water. As Mandlazini is located along the coast, heavy rainfalls are very common at Mandlazini. In comparison there is very little or no rainfall at Ntambanana. Mandlazini has high economic potential and capabilities because of its fertile soil, abundant trees, long grass and rich crops which easily support a large population etc. is the direct opposite for a desolate land of Ntambanana. Emanating from these differences, it is beyond doubt that the forceful removal of the Mthiyane people from Mandlazini to Ntambanana was an example of blatant exploitation. Because of economic potential of the area and particularly because of its potential harbour development, the government decided to intrude. This invasion of private land was made possible because of the apartheid system which centred around separating Black from White. According to this, Black people were to be removed from areas desired by White people for their separate development programme.

**8: AN INVESTIGATION OF PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AT TAMBANANA:
AND WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT DELIVERED ITS PROMISES**

According to Mphangwa, the government did not deliver its promises. As compensation for their land, forests, graves etc., the Mthiyane people had to receive money from the Government, but unfortunately they didn't. The Government had promised to build a

Police Station with enough policemen, for the task of protecting the new arrivals. Again this was not delivered.⁴³ Mphangwa agrees that clinics, schools, community halls were constructed at Ntambanana but he objected that this was not the Government's effort. He maintains that it was his and his peoples who actually made the constructions. According to him, on their arrival at Ntambanana they ploughed sugar cane and in return supplied money (to the Government) which was later used to construct needed infrastructures. Public roads at Ntambanana were not in good condition. Despite the promise that the government would acquaint them with scientific farming methods, ploughs and other equipment etc. nothing was rendered. The government also did not build the temple Shembe as was promised. Lastly the government failed to provide enough transport. Pre-eminently the Mthiyane people suffered at the hands of a political philosophy which strongly manifested itself through violence. It is important to indicate that on their arrival the Mthiyane people were not welcomed by their new neighbours around Ntambanana. The new neighbours were jealous and resentful of their incursion because they regarded the area as theirs. Tension broke out between Mphanzwa Mthiyane (the iNkosi for Mthiyane people) and Biyela (the iNkosi of Ntambanana area). This conflict centred around a territorial dispute. According to Biyela the new arrivals were residing in the area illegally.⁴⁴ This forced removal resulted in conflict between the two Amakhosi which then spread to the people. Violence which strongly manifested itself through deaths was reported day after day.

⁴³ M.Mthiyane: Oral Evidence 8 July 1998

⁴⁴ T.T. Mbuyazi: Oral Evidence, 12 July 1998

On a broader front violence was perpetuated throughout the country which culminated in the Soweto uprising of 1976. Numbers of meetings were held as a means to bring peace between the Biyela and Mthiyane people. By holding talks Mphangwa hoped that the local Biyela people would become less antagonistic towards his people. Unfortunately things became worse.⁴⁵ The Mthiyane people themselves became divided. During the mid-1980's they affiliated to the warring and antagonistic political structures namely Uwusa and UDF. Some of them established sound relations (in terms of politics) with the local Biyela people and became great foes of their fellow men. This happening, according to Mphangwa drastically affected progress among his people. Mphangwa hoped that dialogues (talks) and détente (easing of the strained relations) would prevail. But during the early 1990's the internecine war among Black people, namely the ANC - IFP violence disrupted this progress both in Mphangwa's homestead and in the community. A number of people, including those who were innocent, were killed and houses were burnt. The inkosis prestige declined and an unknown group of people tried to attack him. Nothing effective was done by the National party government to stop this violence. According to T.T. Mbuyazi plus or minus forty people died of violence at Ntambanana.

The fact that the Mthiyane people were unwelcome in Ntambanana meant that things did not auger well in their new society. As was expected the cheap and small houses provided by the government deteriorated rapidly. People soon regarded their area as a slum. Some of them accused the Government that they were treated no better than animals. Khadakhulu argued "how could a man be forced to live in a windowless house?" In contrast with the huge grazing fields at Mandlazini, the hilly Ntambanana had no

⁴⁵ J. Mbuyazi: Oral Evidence, 22 July 1998

worthwhile grazing land. The area could only accommodate goats and a few trees. The government also promised electricity but until 1990 that the area was regarded as a dark city' place. As pointed out above, during 18 year's stay at Ntambanana, tribal conflict and squabbles broke out. It was alleged that the Ntambanana area did not belong to Mbonambi or Mthiyane people. Biyela strongly insisted that the area rightfully belonged to his ancestors. He maintained that if the Mthiyane people had really resisted and kept their ancestral lands of Mandlazini there would be no conflict. Biyela and his people therefore, had the right to protect their ancestral land, Ntambanana. It became apparent that two bulls could not rule in one kraal. Inkosi Mthiyane and Nkosi Biyela could not rule in one territory).⁴⁶

A concerned group which became known as the Mandlazini Crisis Committee under the chairmanship of Selby Mthiyane was formed. It is important to indicate that this group was formed by the young educated politicians. The Government's measures to abolish apartheid, particularly the abolition of the Group Areas Act, paved a way for the Mandlazini Crisis Committee. The intellectual Selby told his supporters that the time had arrived to voice their grievances. He promised the Mthiyane people that he would work day and night so as to emancipate them from the terrible plight brought on them by the National Party Government. He was even prepared to die for these ideas. It is also important to indicate that these young zealots were not working hand in hand with Mphangwa. Some of these youngsters regarded the iNkosi as a sell out. According to

⁴⁶ B.Dube: Oral Evidence 8 July 1998

Selby, it was fruitless to involve Mphangwa in their struggle because the Nkosi was old and inactive.⁴⁷

The Crisis Committee was regarded as an affiliate of the African National Congress (ANC). It was also alleged the ANC supported it financially. Moreover, some of the members were regarded as activists of the South African Communist Party (SACP). Consequently, some members in the (Mthiyane) society did not associate themselves with the committee. Those members were then declared to be the Inkatha Freedom Party's affiliates. This further divided the Mthiyane people.⁴⁸

As a result of these divergent movements (ANC & IFP) yet another committee was formed. As compared to the first one, this one was poorly organised and not really strong. Its members were not educated, unpopular, and not well known in political circles. Nevertheless they worked enthusiastically and at the end they achieved a lot. Despite these two antagonistic committees, there were also neutral people (Christians) who didn't associate themselves with either of the two. Although these Christians were not satisfied, but they decided to remain at Ntambanana. These people followed Mphangwa. Violent and radical actions were not approved by this group.⁴⁹

It became clear that the Mthiyane people were then divided into three main groups. viz., Mandlazini Crisis Committee, under Selby, the second committee, of (Inkatha Affiliates) and Neutral people under Mphangwa (Christians).

⁴⁷ P. Nkosi : Oral Evidence 8 July 1998

⁴⁸ Z. Sokhulu: Oral Evidence 10 July 1998

⁴⁹ S. Sokhulu: Oral Evidence 2 August, 1998

9: MTHIYANE PEOPLE RETURN TO RICHARDS BAY

It has been argued by a number of young educated history analysts (local students from Universities, colleges etc.), that the "divide and rule" system was applied at Ntambanana. These young scholars maintains that this system strongly manifested itself through the application of so-called "third force." Emanating from this , it is not surprising to know that each among the above groups fought only for the survival and success of its followers. It has been alleged that the involvement of the "third force" at Ntambanana centred around dismantling of solidarity among the Mthiyane people.

Selby and his group then presented their case to the Government. It is interesting to note that after a long, talks which were delayed, the Mandlazini Crisis Committee eventually gained victory. It was thought that it was because of the influence of the African National Congress that these people returned to Richards Bay in July 1992. Presently they are residing at the area between Richards Bay airport and Lake Mzingazi. Although these people (returned from Ntambanana) called themselves the Mandlazini people under Mthiyane they are under the RichardsBay TLC. These people are working hand in hand with the Richards Bay TLC., and consequently a lot of progress can be identified. The area (Mandlazini) is already electrified. A number of schools and community halls have been constructed. Good roads are also constructed. In short the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) is highly developed in this area. Being attracted by the potential of the area, a number of outsiders are claiming to be part of Mthiyane clan.

The second group (Inkatha Affiliates) contacted the Richards Bay town Council to ask for assistance in their return. The Council negotiated with iNkosi Umbuyazi (a neighbouring nKosi) for a portion of land. In their first meeting with the Council, two representatives from the Department of Land (Pietermaritzburg) were present. Both were positive. This group was promised 43 hectares of land on which they could live on a temporary basis. The delegation was dissatisfied because they believed that 43 hectares could not accommodate 580 families. Only 14 families were able to obtain land. The rest remained landless.⁵⁰

This area still hasn't got infrastructures i.e. no schools, roads, clinics, electricity etc. "We were just deserted by the State" said Jameson Mbuyazi, the local induna. Presently, these people (Inkatha Affiliate's) are working day and night to get more land. It is not surprising that among 14 families none have either a goat or a cow. The area is surrounded by forests and they were warned that they should guard against fires. It is interesting that these people can be compared with the Israelites, who, on the way to Canaan, thought of returning to Egypt. The majority of these people think of returning to Ntambanana. Some of them are blaming authorities who led them from the area. (Ntambanana).

⁵⁰ M. Sibiya: Oral Evidence 2 August 1998

10: CONCLUSION

The Afrikaans word, apartheid, became the universally employed nomenclature for legalized and enforced racial and ethnic discrimination, notably in the field of residential segregation, job opportunities and political rights.⁵¹

In its original form the word meant 'separateness', however, in the twentieth century it assumed political usage denoting a legally enforced policy to promote the political, social and cultural separation of socially defined communities for the exclusive benefits of one of these communities. In the case of Mandlezini the Whites benefited to the detriment of the Mthiyane people whose lives were greatly affected and in some case disrupted by the forced removal.⁵²

It is noteworthy that when the National Party commenced with the statutory entrenchment of apartheid (1948) South Africa was already deeply immersed in colonial segregationist policies. The later consequences were far-reaching with large scale forced removals of population, and the redrawing of the internal political structures of the state. Race became the dominant element in determining the rights, political and legal of the population⁵³

The whole process was fuelled by the determination of the politically and economically dominant White Afrikaner group to retain power over the country in the face of the rising demands for political rights by the Black majority. It is a sad story.

⁵¹ A.J. Christopher: The Atlas of Apartheid. p.114

⁵² Ibid. The Atlas of Apartheid, p.117

⁵³ Ibid, p.127

SOURCES

It is noteworthy that this research has been largely based on the first-hand information gained from oral sources. These people have witnessed and were part of this forced removal of the Mthiyane people. Very little information has been taken from secondary sources probably because history has mainly been written by White people.

ORAL SOURCES

Dube Bhekinkosi:

During this time of the movement he was a pupil in Standard seven. Presently he is a mathematics teacher at Mtubatuba. It is interesting to note that he is residing at Veld en Vlei (one of the suburbs at Richards Bay). He was interviewed at his home on 8 July 1998.

Mbuyazi T T

This young 32 year old man is presently employed by Alusaf (Hillside Smelter). He is employed as an operator. During the time of the movement T.T. was doing Standard one at the local school. He was interviewed on 9 July 1998.

Mbuyazi Jameson

He is the induna for the people who returned from Ntambanana. His homestead is at Salongwa, near R.B.M. Jameson could not read nor write. It is therefore almost impossible for him to remember his date of birth but estimated he is about 50 years old.

Mbuyazi Mansizwa

Like Jameson, Marsizwa is illiterate. He never went to school. Even though Mansizwa has a wife and three children, all are at high school. He was interviewed at his home on 10 July 1998.

Mthethwa Albert

This is the only man interviewed at Oyangweni (Kwa-Mthethwa). He is the advisor for Ntemba Mthethwa, an inkosi for the Mthethwa people. His homestead is on the left hand side of Uyongo High School. He was interviewed on 6 June 1998.

Mthimkhulu Ambrose

He left school at a higher primary level. Today he is a truck driver. His wife is a matron at Richards Bay hospital. Amrose is forty years old. He has five children. He was interviewed on 24 June 1998.

Mthiyane Mpaangwa

Presently he is seventy nine years old. He is an inkosi for the Mthiyane people. He supplements his pension fund by a little income from sugar cane but he is relatively penniless. He was interviewed at his homestead on 8 and 9 August 1998.

Mthiyane Themba

During the time of the movement, Tema was doing Standard 6 at a local school. Presently he is an operator at R.B.C.T. He was interviewed at Sabonzwe on 6 August 1998.

Mthiyane Mpiyeza

Mpyeza is 39 years old, and has 8 children. He is working at Eskom. He was interviewed at Ntambanana on 7 July 1998.

Mthiyane Khondakhulu

Presently Khandakhulu is a teacher at Enseleni. He was interviewed at Enseleni Township on 28 August 1998. During the time of movement, 6 Wednesday 1976, he was doing Standard 8 at eSibonkuhle Secondary School.

Sibiya Mpangazitha

Mpangazitha is 32 years old. He is a male nurse at Ngwelezane hospital. He is residing at eNgwelezane township. His wife is a teacher. They have 2 children. He was interviewed on 13 June 1998.

Sokhulu Thembi

Thembi is residing at Ntambonana. Her husband is a bricklayer. She was interviewed at Ntambanana on 8 & 12 June 1998.

Sokhulu Solomon

Solomon is about 40 years old. He is illiterate. He was interviewed on 7 June 1998.

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