

"AFTER THORNHILL" — A RESETTLEMENT PLAN FOR CISKEIAN IMMIGRANTS EX HERSCHEL AND GLEN GREY DISTRICTS.

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With the excision of the Herschel and Glen Grey Districts from the Ciskeian Homeland and their incorporation into the Transkei, approximately 5 000 families, comprising between 25 000 to 30 000 people, abandoned their former homes and lands in the two districts and together with their livestock and household possessions fled to the Hewu District of the Ciskei.

During the month of August, 1976, with the co-operation and assistance of the then Department of Bantu Administration and Development, some 1 600 livestock units were moved from the Herschel district to temporary pasturage on Claremont A & B and Allanwater farms, adjacent to Sada township near Whittlesea in the Queenstown district. These animals were conveyed to the area by road transport at the cost of the Republican Government in anticipation of their owners moving across to the Ciskei.

On September 23rd, 1976, representatives of the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner's office, Queenstown, handed over to representatives of the Ciskeian Government, Department of Agriculture and Forestry, two farms namely the infamous Thornhill and Loudon, situated in the Upper Swart Kei Basin on which it was proposed to establish a transitory holding settlement for the anticipated influx of refugees.

On instructions from the Homeland government, the Department of Agriculture and Forestry set about the selection of suitable sites for the establishment of residential settlements and proceeded to lay out hundreds of residential plots and construct roads giving access to these sites. At the same time the Ciskeian Department of Works were instructed to develop water resources and arrange for the erection of Fletch Craft huts and toilet facilities.

The 'great trek' commenced some few weeks later and continued for approximately 5 to 6 months with over a hundred families a day arriving at 'Thornhill' on transport supplied by the Republican Government. These families arrived with all their household possession, furniture, cattle, sheep, goats, horses, donkeys, dogs, cats, etc. Each family was issued with a tent and allocated a temporary residential site. In this manner some 3 000 families from Herschel were received at Thornhill farm and similarly some 1 600 to 2 000 families from Glen Grey arrived at a second temporary residential site at Sada and Pavet farm in the Oxkraal area (situated astride the Whittlesea/Katberg road).

During the course of this operation a number of additional farms adjoining the original two, (viz., Thornhill and Loudon) were acquired by the Department of Plural Relations and Development and handed over to the Ciskeian Department of Agriculture and Forestry. The situation by the end of February, 1977, was that some 3 000 families and 6 000 mature livestock units ex Herschel were accommodated on a number of former white owned farming units which together totalled approximately 7 023 hectares.

In negotiations between the Ciskei and Republican Governments on the excision of the two districts of Herschel and Glen Grey, it was agreed that a total area of some 29 000 ha of land would be acquired in the Upper Swart Kei region, comprising approximately 17 farms (all of which would be set aside specifically for the resettlement of the Herschel immigrants excluding some pre-selected areas for institutional Ciskeian Government sponsored development projects). Against this background and the anticipation that the planning unit would comprise approximately 29 000 ha as against the immediately available 7 023 ha, the

Ciskeian Government resolved that the initial settlement would be undertaken as a transitory type exercise until a comprehensive regional development plan could be formulated to promote the development of economically viable communities on the total area.

The majority of the Herschel immigrants in electing to move to the Ciskei followed the leadership of three traditional chiefs, viz. senior Chief Hinqana, Chief Malefane and Chief Bebeza and in addition a large number of families owing allegiance to three other chiefs who elected to remain in the Transkei, deserted their chiefs and moved across as an unaffiliated group.

In settling in at Thornhill some of the unaffiliated group have now affiliated to one or other of the three abovenamed chiefs, while others are seeking a separate allocation of land with a view to establishing a new chieftomship.

Invidious and invalid comparisons have often been drawn between black and white agriculture without regard to the constraints of lack of credit, services, ineffective marketing, etc., on the former. For these reasons valuable areas of physical resources have been dissipated by subdivision into innumerable sub-economic fragmentary holdings, on which Ciskeians have been settled to engage in agricultural activity.

The philosophy now adopted for the planning of the regional Ntabatamba area (the name now applied to the infamous Thornhill area and meaning "Mountain of Hope") seeks to redress the omissions and constraints of the past and create an infrastructure on which viable communities may be successfully established and sustained.

The Ntabatamba area, comprising 17 former white owned farms, located to the east and south of the Swart Kei River in the Hewu district, formerly part of Queenstown, is situated in a mild sub-arid climate where the mean annual rainfall is below 500 mm and more than 70% of the precipitation is during the six months October to March. The physiography consists mainly of ranges of hills or isolated hills with wide, gently undulating plains between. Towards the Winterberge, the physiography becomes more mountainous. The Swart Kei River is slightly incised into the gently undulating landscape. Narrow alluvial terraces have formed along the banks. December, January and February are the hottest months, averaging slightly over 29°C, with a difference between mean maximum and mean minimum of about 15°. Winter nights are cold with mean minimum temperatures of 3°C. The area is subjected to a fairly long frost period.

The vegetation according to Acocks (Veld Types of South Africa) falls into the dry *Cymbopogon-thermida* grassveld with *Acacia karroo* invasion over a considerable area. *Eragrostis* species seem to be dominant over the greater part of the area with *Thermida triandra* dominant on well preserved veld. *Cymbopogon* only occurs as a sub-dominant grass over most of the area. Other common grasses are *Aristida digitaria*, *cynoden* species.

Under former white ownership and management, beef production has always been the main farming enterprise in this region. Sheep feature in the farming pattern but play a subordinate role. Cultivation and dry-land cropping is considered completely unprofitable and is not recommended. In fact, the ploughing of arable land which cannot be irrigated is considered extremely wasteful in

terms of effective veld utilization.

Alluvial terraces along the perennial rivers are extensively used. Lucerne and to a lesser extent maize for silage are grown under irrigation. Weirs and unlined canals supply the water and the fields are flood irrigated. Oats are grown on a limited scale. Dairying on a small scale — mainly industrial milk — is practised by some of the farmers. Veld management and erosion control have been at a high standard on most of the farms during the past. Drinking water for cattle is supplied by a large number of dams and windmills.

The experience of white farmers in the area over many generations proved the futility of dryland agriculture under the semi-arid and unreliable climatic conditions which prevail in this area.

It follows that successful development of the area will depend largely on the extent to which irrigation and water resources can be conserved, developed and reticulated to areas of suitable arable soil of irrigable capability. Without irrigated farming the area is entirely unsuited to fragmentary type peasant settlement on an agricultural basis.

On the basis of this concept and prior to any detailed land-use planning, land-use consultants were commissioned to survey the pedological resources of approximately 19 000 of the total 29 000 hectare regional unit. In assessing the suitability of the soils for irrigated land use, only soil criteria were taken into account. Availability of water for irrigation, cost of bringing the water to and irrigating the land, possible returns per unit area of irrigated land and other economic as well as social factors were not considered.

The approximate extent of the various irrigation suitability classes in the Swart Kei area are as follows:

Suitability rating for irrigated land use	Approximate extent (ha)
High	111
Moderately high	960
Moderate/moderately high	350
Moderate	6813
Low	1947
Very Low	5454
Not utilisable	2354
TOTAL	19688

Therefore the percentage suitable for development under irrigation with moderate or higher potential (i.e. 8 234 ha) = 41,7% of the total area.

From the above it follows that the development of the full potential of the area will depend largely on the extent to which irrigation water resources can be conserved and developed and reticulated to the areas of irrigable capability.

In addition to the pedological assessment, the grazing potential of the area was also evaluated by the consultants. On the basis of Acock's description of the veld types and the actual condition of the grass swards, the veld was classified as mixed or mixed/sweet veld and the present carrying capacities range from an estimated 8 ha/ mature livestock unit on very rocky slopes and badly eroded alluvial/colluvial fans to about 4 ha/ M.L.U. on the deeper clay pan soils. At the time of the survey it was noted that all the farms seemed to be well planned, with sufficient fenced camps and watering points.

Concurrently with the natural resources surveys, a demographic census was conducted by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry and in the course of the census the Herschel immigrants were requested to indicate to which of the three substantive chiefs they would affiliate in the Ntabatamba area. On the basis of these figures and on the percentage of each chief's followers to the total number of immigrant families, it was proposed that the regional area be subdivided accordingly. The results of this study were as follows:

Chief Hinana	1661 families	55,3%
Chief Malefane	996 families	32,2%
Chief Bebeza	346 families	11,5%
Total	3 003 families	100%

Taking into account the physiological features the following areas of land were allocated to the respective chiefs.

Chief Hinana	9 870 ha	45,75% of total area
Chief Malefane	7 565 ha	35,07% of total area
Chief Bebeza	4 138 ha	19,18% of total area
Total	21 573 ha	100%

On the basis of the pedological survey and available water resources, areas of irrigable potential were then determined in each chief's area. In view of the very limited water supplies available it was recommended that in the first instance each former land right holder be allocated a 1/4 ha subsistence plot under irrigation. This represents a plot of land 50 m square from which the average subsistence farmer would readily be able to produce all his food requirements, plus possibly some R50 pocket money per annum. The small size of the proposed land allocation may well be questioned but it should be clearly noted that, from a 1/4 ha under irrigation the subsistence farmer would be assured each year of his food crops, whereas from even a much larger land unit under dryland conditions he would produce practically nothing other than in an exceptionally good rainfall year.

On this basis the allocation of 1/4 ha plots would be as follows:-

Chief Hinana	747 land right holders requiring 140 hectares under irrigation
Chief Malefane	524 land right holders requiring 131 hectares under irrigation
Chief Bebeza	211 land right holders requiring 53 hectares under irrigation

Total 1 482 plots requiring an area of 324 hectares under irrigation.

In addition to the subsistence plots, further allocations of agricultural land would be restricted initially to highly productive riverine alluvial soil and these areas would be subdivided on the basis of fully economic sized holdings of \pm 4 ha and allocated to selected bona fide farmers in each chief's area. On this basis the following areas are available and would provide for the settlement of the following number of economic unit farmers:-

Chief Hinana	1004 ha	231 economic holdings
Chief Malefane	690 ha	172 economic holdings
Chief Bebeza	335 ha	84 economic holdings
Total	2029 ha	507 economic holdings

At this stage of planning it is doubtful whether adequate water resources can be developed to irrigate the total area.

From these economic units and as and when adequate water supplies are available, it is envisaged that the average farmer could be in a position to produce an annual income of approximately R1 000 to R1 500 nett per annum.

In approaching the allocation of land on the basis of irrigated settlement, experience within the Ciskei and elsewhere in developing African countries, has clearly demonstrated the vital need for smallholder and irrigation schemes to be supported, organised and disciplined by some parent body management agency. To cater for this prerequisite to successful irrigation settlement farming, it was recommended that areas of high potential within each chief's area, where water resources for irrigation can readily be developed, be set aside and operated as tribal farms or agricultural servicing centres. Offers have been made by various white farmers presently living within the purchase areas, to voluntarily run, operate and manage these farms on behalf of each chief.

It is envisaged that these agricultural service centres or tribal farms would operate pools of mechanical equipment and make available all necessary farming requisites to both subsistence and economic farmers. Each tribal farm will itself engage in economic farming operations and food or cash crops produced would be either locally sold or redistributed to other parts of the Ciskei on a cash marketing basis by the Ciskeian Marketing Board. Alternatively cash crops may well be exported. Initially these farms will require financial assistance from the government for the development of the infrastructure and provision of mechanical equipment.

Within each chief's area, rural residential villages have been planned for on the basis of proximity to the irrigated subsistence plots, the availability of water resources which could readily be developed and sited on non-arable or non-irrigable soils. It is estimated that the 7 sites demarcated, together with the development of Ntabatamba town will more than adequately cater for the total 3 000 families. It is envisaged that farmers allocated economic units \pm 4 ha will erect their homes and live on their irrigated allotments.

The Ntabatamba town site as well as the proposed industrial sites have been selected by Professor Page of the Institute for Planning Research, Stellenbosch University. The final selection of the Bullhoek site relates to a number of important considerations, viz.,

- (a) while the area comprises good arable land it is extremely unlikely that irrigated farming could be economically developed at this elevation;
- (b) the site is better sheltered from the bitterly cold south-west winds which are a distressing feature of the winter climate in this area;
- (c) water supplies could readily be developed from the proposed Bullhoek dam, which is within the capabilities of the Department to construct, using its own development units.

In the longer term once the main irrigation dam is constructed on the Swart Kei River, water supplies to the Bullhoek dam could be augmented via the proposed canal.

- (d) While it is desirable that residential settlements should be located on the Bullhoek plateau, industrial development will demand good road and rail communications; for this reason an industrial site is located adjacent to the main Kama-stone/Donnybrook road and at the nearest convenient point to the Waverley rail siding, 16 km distant. A new direct road of 1 km length will link the town to the proposed industrial area.

The location of Ntabatamba town and industrial site in the Upper Swart Kei area will lead to balanced regional development of the Hewu district. It will provide for a further growth centre in the western sector of the district to counter balance any tendency to over concentrate development in Whittlesea, the existing growth centre located on the extreme eastern boundary of the district. See figure for location of sites.

The area is well endowed with a large number of high yielding boreholes, some reputed to yield over 68 000 litres per hour. The majority of the rural residential areas have been placed in close proximity to a number of these boreholes on the assumption that two or three of these could be coupled to pumping installation to provide good quality domestic and livestock water supplies.

Although no specific details are available in respect of each and every borehole in the areas still under negotiation for purchase, it is anticipated that no difficulty will be experienced in providing each rural residential area and adjacent grazing camps with good, clean, healthy water.

The development of irrigation water supplies is vital to the successful implementation of the proposed land use development plan. One factor which will greatly contribute to the successful development of required water supplies is the capacity within the Ciskeian Department of Agriculture and forestry to undertake the

construction of many of the irrigation dams using its own mechanical construction units. The dam on Bullhoek farm will receive first priority, followed thereafter by the construction of the two dams on the Tentergate farm. These dams will initially rely entirely on normal stormwater run off from their respective catchments which, under the very low annual rainfall cannot be expected to provide more than a token water supply for the irrigation of vast areas of high potential irrigable land.

Development of irrigation on the basis of the $\frac{1}{4}$ ha irrigated subsistence plots in the area of Chief Bebeza will need to rely on pumped water from existing high yielding boreholes. In the event that delays are experienced in the dam construction programme it would be necessary to provide for suitable pumping schemes to serve the areas of Chief Malefane and Chief Hinana. In the longer term, the whole success of the development of the area will depend on the construction of the Otterford Dam on the Swart Kei River itself. This one dam, conserving the consistently good yield of the Upper Swart Kei River catchment comprising the bulk of the greater annually snow blanketed Winterberg range, will provide the bulk of the water supplies required to successfully implement the proposals contained in the plan.

For immediate consideration is the proposal put forward to make use of the water of an existing dam constructed high in the upper catchment area of the Swart Kei River. This dam which presently has a capacity of 3 130 megalitres and which by the addition of some 2 metres of embankment could be raised to a capacity of 8 876 megalitres, is owned by a group of white farmers. These farmers have proposed that the dam be increased in capacity by the Ciskeian Government and that water be purchased from them for immediate use for the development of the Ntabatamba area. The proposed canal at the elevation of 4450 ASL offers no great construction difficulties, it could readily be constructed in a combined operation between the Ciskeian Government and a civil engineering contractor.

For many years a group of white farmers have operated a game park on portions of the farms Lily Fountain, Thibet Park, Donnybrook, Vrisgewagt, and Otterford which are now to be transferred to the Ciskei. In conjunction with various hunting safari companies these farmers have engaged in commercialised tourist operation and catered for a succession of overseas hunters and visitors.

In being faced with the disposal of these farms to the South African government for incorporation into the consolidated Ciskei, the white farmers have offered their wild life asset and their services to the Ciskeian Government to continue to run and operate the game park and tourist attraction. The Ciskei Government has wholeheartedly agreed to the continuation of the project and is currently, with the assistance of the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Queenstown and the Cape Provincial Nature Conservation Department, attempting to control poaching and the exploitation of the wild life on these farms. The Ciskeian Department of Agriculture and Forestry has provided in the 1978/79 financial year for the employment of a parks manager and game ranger and will, immediately on transfer of the land, seek to effectively reinforce the existing perimeter fencing.

Attempts will also be made to find the necessary funds to construct a tourist lodge in an attractive setting. Any revenue from the hunting fees, accommodation, sale of game biltong and curios will accrue to the project and the Ciskeian Government.

The livestock improvement centre and fattening ranch proposal arises out of the original offer on the part of some of the white farmers in the Upper Swart Kei to provide livestock and management services to establish this government institution. An establishment of this nature will greatly facilitate improvement in the quality of the indigenous livestock and speed up a transition from traditional livestock ownership to economic livestock farming. It is envisaged that the fattening ranch will be open and available to livestock owners in all the chief's areas including the adjacent existing locations of the Ciskei. The proportioning of the area as detailed in the plan makes provision for a total livestock

carrying capacity of some 2 922 M.L.U. on an extensive system of management, calculated on a stocking ratio of 1 M.L.U. to 6 ha of natural veld. It is confidently anticipated that with more intensive systems of farming, incorporating the production of fodder banks under irrigation, the carrying capacity could be increased considerably. Even so, the present vast numbers of livestock units pastured in the area will need to be drastically reduced by at least some 2 000 to 3 000 livestock units. In the event that the farms of Claremont A & B, Allanwater, New Hawstead, and part of Haytor can continue to serve the requirements of the Ntabatamba community, (this area is also to be utilised as a holding ground) the reduction could be restricted to some 1 000 to 1 800 M.L.U. Under no circumstances can the presently applied stocking rate be allowed to continue beyond the very immediate future. Previous

injudicious stocking of the veld is starkly evident in the serious and devastating physical erosion to be seen on the farm Humanby where extremely valuable soil areas have been rendered useless and unusable.

The proposals made in this development plan for the rehabilitation of the Herschel immigrants have been discussed in full with each chief and his Tribal Authority. Tours have been conducted throughout each chief's area and the various features of the development plan explained and debated at length with the communities concerned. The plan has received their approval with the exception of the recommendations for livestock reduction.

Successful implementation of the plan, together with willing cooperation of the chiefs and community will ensure a far better deal for the people concerned and make a more productive contribution to the development of the Ciskeian Homeland.

STATISTICAL DETAILS RELATING TO NTABATEMBA LAND-USE PLAN

Name of Chief	Area (ha) allocated	% of Total Area	Area (ha) of Tribal Farm	Area (ha) available ¼ ha plots	Area (ha) available 4 ha plots	Area (ha) for rural residential	Area (ha) for dams	Area of Ntabatamba town	Grazing areas	Livestock carrying capacity
Hinana	9 870	45,75	967	750	1 004	144	180	332	6 546	1 091
Malefane	7 565	35,07	1213	449	690	78	37	—	5 098	850
Bebeza	4 138	19,18	614	324	335	195	4	—	2 670	465
Totals	21 573	100,00	2794	1 523	2 029	417	121	332	14 314	2 406

Area of Livestock Improvement and Fattening Ranch =	3 100	516
TOTAL LIVESTOCK CARRYING AREA CAPACITY =	17 414	2 922

Area of Game Ranch and Tourist Centre	6 490 hectares
Total of Regional Area	31 163 hectares
Surface of Otterford Dam	454 hectares
Rough estimate of capacity of Otterford Dam =	50 000 000 cubic metres.

THE CISKEI CONFERENCE

An innovation that lent considerable interest to the proceedings of the conference was the concept of a problem statement and a keynote address to enlarge on the development problems of a developing country and, more specifically, the Ciskei. The keynote address was followed by a number of short contributions, some of which contained very positive and challenging ideas, particularly in regard to agricultural development.

Because the problem statement was published in advance - not only as part of the pre-published papers but also in the local press - it elicited a big response, some of it politically oriented. The political content created a sense of frustration regarding the development proposals on the national level. It largely mitigated against the pragmatism of planning which is a process of adjustment to challenge and discussion. A more

positive response to the proposals may have served towards the emergence of an acceptable development strategy rather than ending in a morass of uncertainty.

Some of the evaluations of papers were based on tenuous academic niceties rather than on practical realities. These academics who spoke against the normal process of development through economic diversification from agriculture to manufacturing and the tertiary sector were ignoring the fact that the process had already set in at Sada, Dimbaza and Zwelitsha and has advanced to the metropolitan stage at Mdantsane- East London. The proposed national plan is merely an attempt to provide the locational framework for this process of urbanization.

D. PAGE