

REMOVALS
21-24

MEMORANDUM TO THE STATE PRESIDENT AND SUPREME CHIEF OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

This memorandum was drawn up by the Citizens' Action Committee and was handed to the State President's private secretary in Pretoria on Tuesday, 12th November, together with the signed copies of the petition.

THE CITIZENS' ACTION COMMITTEE is a group of citizens associated together for the purpose of drawing public attention to matters of national importance.

We respectfully wish, Mr. President, to draw your attention to significant facts about the arbitrary uprooting and removal from their homes of hundreds of thousands of defenceless South Africans who are thus denied the right to live together with their families; are expelled from urban areas where they have often been long established; are turned into displaced persons, forced to live in alien, inadequately prepared, inaccessible and often unviable areas.

We ask that your compassion be extended to the needless sufferings of these voiceless people and your attention be given to the impact of this process on their spiritual needs and material welfare.

We know that you are aware that what is happening to them has been through no fault of their own; that they have been caught up in the net of political policies, imposed upon them without consultation, which causes much suffering, degradation and, not unnaturally, eroding resentment.

We feel that if notice is not taken of their plight, tragic consequences for our whole nation will follow in the future.

We ask you to bring the facts which we set out below to the urgent attention of your Prime Minister and all Ministers of State to whom these matters refer.

SECTION 1. REMOVALS OF WHOLE COMMUNITIES

BLACK SPOT REMOVALS

51,123 Africans were removed from Black Spots up to the end of 1963.¹

1. *Institute of Race Relations Survey, 1965. Page 130.*

21,813 Africans were removed between 1963 and 1967.²

9,170 Africans were due to be moved in North Natal alone during 1968.³

645 African families were moved to a new area between Elands River and Pilanes Mountain between August, 1966 and March 1968⁴.

Originally there were 469 Black Spots.⁵ At the end of 1967, 276 Black Spots remained to be dealt with.⁶

The African people who have been removed have, for the most part, been settled for generations in their homes, sometimes on land held under freehold title registered in the Deeds Office. They are now being uprooted and forced to live where the government says they must live. In spite of the fact that the authorities declare that no one is moved without consultation the people are given no real choice about whether they wish to move at all or where they wish to live. Those who raise objections or refuse to move are eventually prosecuted. They have to give up their homes, their land, their familiar surroundings and whatever means they may have of supplementing their meagre incomes through subsistence farming or nearby employment. All who owned less than 20 morgen of land⁷ before removal are moved to closer settlements which often lack the barest essentials of existence viz: water, latrines, houses, shops, schools, clinics. The people must build their homes with a dearth of building materials;

2. *Hansard No. 3, 1968. Col. 833.*

3. *Hansard No. 13, 1968. Col 5049.*

4. *Hansard No. 4, 1968. Col. 1411.*

5. *Institute of Race Relations Survey, 1965. Page 130.*

6. *Hansard No. 3, 1968. Col. 833.*

7. *Institute of Race Relations Survey, 1965. Page 130.*

they are denied livestock or sufficient land to plant crops;

GROUP AREAS REMOVALS

Up to May, 1967, 1,000 group areas in 291 different parts of the country had been proclaimed. The proclamation of group areas in 102 other centres was under consideration at that time.¹

Coloured People

In Cape Town alone, out of a total Coloured population of 417, 881 (1960 census) 21,755 families had been affected by group area proclamations by 1967.² Market research estimates 5.8 persons per family. Assuming 5 persons per family this makes an approximate figure of 108,755 persons affected. These figures do not include places in the Cape Peninsula such as Simon's Town, Kalk Bay, Fish Hoek.

In the Transvaal, out of a total Coloured population of 119,700, 85% have been affected by group areas proclamations,³ that is 101,715 people.

In Johannesburg alone 45,800 Coloured people have been affected.⁴

Indian People

In Durban alone, out of a total Indian population of 236,477, 41,000 people have al-

ready been moved and an estimated 90,000 to 100,000 have still to be moved.⁵

Out of a total Indian population in the Transvaal of 99,000, 92.5%⁶ have been affected by group areas proclamations, that is 91,000 people, and in Johannesburg alone 37,300 have been affected.⁷

The Minister of Community Development said in Durban on 24th September, 1968 that since the Group Areas Act came into force 20,771 Coloured families (130,000 persons) and 17,800 Indian families (110,000 persons) had been rehoused.⁸

AFRICAN PEOPLE

In Johannesburg alone 133,000 African people have been affected by group area removals.⁹

Slum Clearance

It is often maintained that many of these group area removals have in fact been slum clearance projects, and there can be no denial of the necessity for slum clearance or of the fact that many people are now better housed than they were previously. The Citizens' Action Committee has no quarrel with slum clearance as such. But neither can there be any denial of the fact that thousands of people have been moved from their long-established homes, not to clear slums, but because their home areas have been declared white. They have lost freehold rights they once possessed; they have been moved much further away from their places of employment with consequent inconvenience and rise in transport costs; though many may be better housed there are also many who have had to lower their standards; by and large money has to be found for higher rentals by people who can ill afford it; fisher folk, whose livelihood is the sea, and to whom proximity to the sea is essential, have been moved away from their harbours; Coloured and Indian traders have lost their businesses; whole communities of

1. *Hansard No. 17, Col. 6741, May 26th, 1967.*
2. *Families resettled up to 1963 — 2,554: — R.R. /99/65. Families resettled in 1963 — 2,098: — JL2/8/65. Families waiting resettlement in 1963 — 10,958: — JL2/8/65. Institute of Race Relations. District Six Proclamation — 5,495: — Institute of Race Relations Survey 1967. Page 200. Fraserdale Proclamation — 150: — Institute of Race Relations Survey 1966. Page 189. Claremont Proclamation — 500: — Institute of Race Relations Survey 1966. Page 190.*
3. *Institute of Race Relations Survey 1966. Page 182. 101,745 people.*
4. *Introduction to South Africa — M. Horrell. Page 23.*

5. *The South African Indian — S.A. Institute of Race Relations. Page 15/16.*
6. *Institute of Race Relations Survey 1966. Page 182.*
7. *Introduction to South Africa — M. Horrell. Page 23.*
8. *Rand Daily Mail, 25th September 1968.*
9. *Introduction to South Africa — M. Horrell. Page 23.*

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people have been subjected to the trauma and upheaval of mass removals with inevitable disturbance to their community life, their personal life, their family life and their security.

SECTION 2: REMOVALS OF INDIVIDUALS

ENDORSEMENTS OUT OF URBAN AREAS

86,186 African people were endorsed out of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Kimberley, the Witwatersrand, Pietermaritzburg, Durban (excluding women), Bloemfontein and Pretoria in 1965 alone.¹

9,377 people were removed under police surveillance to their respective homelands from Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban during the six months between November, 1967 and April, 1968.²

203,500 African people from white urban areas had been resettled in centres in the homelands by February, 1968.³

Since 1966 the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development has refused to give the numbers of endorsed out people in answer to parliamentary questions.

Family Life

As a result of endorsements out of urban areas of people who are unable to establish domiciliary proof, of youths who have been to school in rural areas, of women who are widowed, divorced or deserted, of old people who are no longer able to work, of people who have been living and working in an urban area but who have in some manner infringed the Pass Laws, families are broken up, husbands separated from their wives, wives from husbands, children from parents, old people from their children.

Some of these people may have a familiar homeland to return to and some family member to welcome them, but very many become the displaced persons who help to swell the populations of the resettlement villages with which they are totally unfamiliar, where they are neither known nor wanted and where they are severed from their families.

1. *Institute of Race Relations Survey 1966.* Page 162.

2. *Hansard No. 13, 1968. Col. 4766.*

3. *Hansard No. 4, 1968. Col. 1173.*

RESETTLEMENT VILLAGES

49,299 Africans had been resettled in 24 resettlement villages by February, 1967. This figure includes women, children under 16 and males under 18 only.¹ No figures were given for men. These places were established for the displaced people of South Africa. Other displaced people have been settled in different types of new centres in the homelands. Conditions vary, and with the passage of time and by dint of the efforts of the inhabitants and by government assistance these villages become more settled and more established, but there is no guarantee that once moved the people will not be moved again. They are denied any security of tenure, they are denied the right to choose their way of life, their traditional way of life is forcibly altered, and they are removed from their long-established homes. Work opportunities are rarely available in the vicinity. Such opportunities as lie at hand are usually seasonal or agricultural labour. The men must leave their families and go far afield to the white areas as contract workers on one year contracts. The old, women and children make up the large part of the population of most of these resettlement villages. Women who are breadwinners are actually prevented by regulation from taking employment as contract workers in most white urban areas. Normal family life is impossible. In Sada, for example, which was established in 1963, although there are now schools, Churches and a clinic there is still almost no available employment. The men must go away as contract workers and the women have been employed from time to time at 25 cents per day chopping out noxious weeds and working on the land, but this is at best seasonal, and in the drought conditions which exist there, the work ceases. The majority of the people seem to live on old-age or disability pensions — a maximum of R44 per year. When pension and earned income total R65.40 per year the pension is cancelled entirely. There is little hope of these places becoming viable communities in the future under these conditions. No truly stable urban life can be established when there is no logical reason for the very existence of such a town. There is no future for the people who live in these rural settlements.

There is no future for the children who grow up in them.

1. *Hansard No. 5, 1967. Col. 1638.*

COMMENT

Hundreds of thousands of South African citizens have been and are being summarily uprooted, moved from their homes, resettled.

They are given no choice, nor is there any meaningful consultation.

No consideration is shown for their aspirations and security and for the suffering caused.

Scant provision is made for any of their needs, material or spiritual or for their means of livelihood.

Their family life is being disrupted, and the migrant labour policy ensures that this phenomenon can only increase.

Their rights, their needs and their human dignity are disregarded.

CONCLUSION

The Citizens' Action Committee, and the 21,937 signatories to the Petition, believe that justice and the need for stability in South Africa can best be served by having secure communities and stable family life and that the facts presented above strike at the roots of our society.

They believe that, irrespective of party affiliation or political creed, there are universal moral standards to which all adhere which cannot countenance the disruption of the lives of others or the denial to them of security and of stable family life.

Confident that this belief is shared by all who uphold the principles of democratic Western civilization, and that it is unawareness of the multitude of people and the magnitude of the disruption that has permitted the harsh realities of the prevailing conditions

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to develop, the Citizens' Action Committee and the signatories appeal to you to exercise your powers and influence to stop these grave wrongs which are being perpetrated on non-white South African citizens.

THE PETITION

WE, the undersigned, ask you to show concern for the fact that in the name of the law and for the sake of ideology, hundreds of thousands of South Africans are being:—

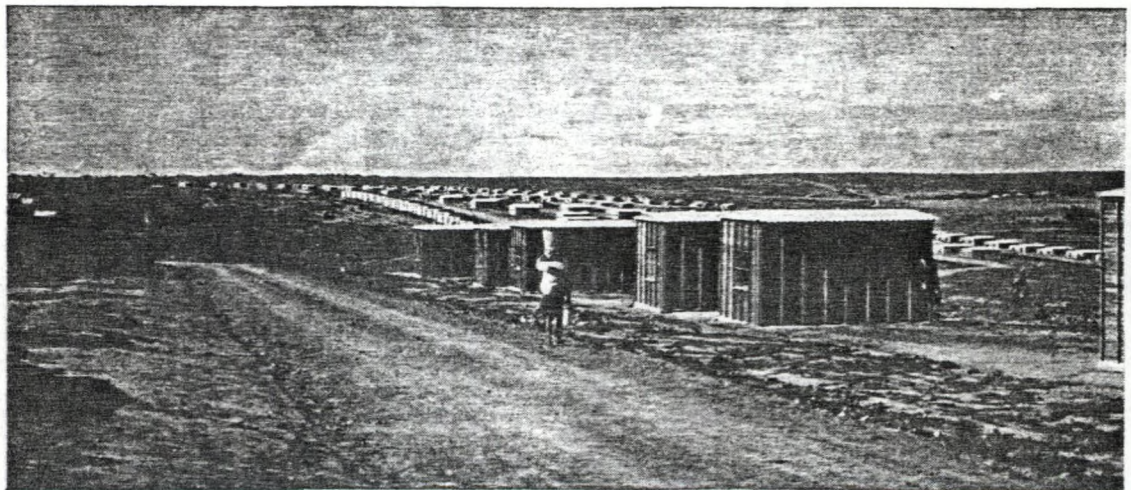
Arbitrarily uprooted and removed from their homes with disregard for their material and spiritual needs and their means of livelihood;

Denied the right to live together with their families.

Expelled from urban areas where they have been living and working and turned into displaced persons, without concern for their aspirations and security and the suffering caused.

We believe that justice and the need for stability in South Africa can best be served by having secure communities and stable family life and that the matters complained of strike at the roots of our society.

We urge you to exercise your powers and influence to stop these grave wrongs which are being perpetrated on our non-white fellow countrymen.



The Black Sash, November 1968

Die Swart Serp, November 1968

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