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MEMORANDUM FOR PRESENTATION TO THE NATAL
AGRICULTURAL UNION AND FARMING REPRESENTATIVES
FROM EAST GRIQUALAND

BY MANGOSUTHU BUTHELEZI, CHIEF MINISTER OF KWAZULU
AND PRESIDENT OF INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY

ULUNDI : NOVEMBER 29, 1993

Gentlemen, welcome to Ulundi. I look forward to this opportunity to speak to you directly about your concerns. The people of KwaZulu/Natal have always stood together in times of need. This kindred spirit is not about to dissolve with the first sign of threat of an imminent take-over by power-hungry political groups. We have many battles ahead of us, and we will fight these battles

together with a united voice.

Before I focus on your concerns regarding the re-incorporation of East Griqualand into the Cape, I would like to place this issue in context by providing you with a background to the politics of boundaries.

As you will all remember, last year the South African Government received a referendum go-ahead from white South Africans to embark on a process of negotiations which would lead to the constitutional entrenchment of power-sharing with, among others, the ANC. The South African Government gave their word that regional autonomy would be guaranteed in any new political dispensation, leaving the issues of boundaries, powers and functions up to the regions to decide.

The trust that South Africans placed in President FW de Klerk and his National Party Government has been flagrantly violated. The Government negotiating

team, headed by Constitutional Minister Mr Roelf Meyer, acted far beyond its mandate and capitulated to almost every ANC demand. Together they have agreed to an Interim Constitution which would guarantee the control of both parties during the period of transition. They have devised a constitutional framework that preserves the unitary state and provides no effective guarantees against any abuse of power.

To accommodate these proposals the South African Government has totally abandoned its referendum agreement to a fully-fledged constitution detailing the powers and boundaries of regions and states, prior to the election of a new

government. The Negotiating Council at Kempton Park appointed a Commission on Demarcation and the Delimitation of Regions, which was tasked with preparing a report on regional boundaries and regional power structures.

Gentlemen, in effect the Constituent Assembly has been vested with the powers to totally re-write the final constitution of South Africa after the elections.

Nothing in it is entrenched, nothing is sacrosanct. Every negotiated agreement agreed upon by the Negotiating Council, including the Commission's proposals for regional boundaries, will be open to change by the Constituent Assembly that will be established after the 27 April elections.

The National Party Government has agreed that the Constituent Assembly is to be the final arbiter of the powers and boundaries of regions. The Constituent Assembly will have the power to put the entire regional dispensation on hold, and will provide no guarantees whatsoever for regional empowerment.

Our experience with the ANC through the Commission on Boundaries, is proof enough that regional interests will be obliterated by an almighty central government. The Negotiating Council gave the Commission on Demarcation and the Delimitation of Regions specific guidelines on the criteria to be considered in the demarcation process.

The findings of the Commission clearly implied that national politics was paramount, and that the only issue of consequence in South Africa is how to broker a national political settlement as quickly as possible. The only views that were given serious consideration were those of the ANC/South African Communist Party alliance and National Party Government.

Fears that a new southern boundary of Natal might be drawn to please politicians without regard to practical and economic realities were expressed repeatedly at a sitting of the Commission in Kokstad. Although the

Commission indicated that they did not arrive with hard and fast views on the

subject, and that their minds were open, this was most definitely not the impression they gave to those present.

East Griqualand is probably the most disputed piece of land in Southern Africa. Griquas, Transkeians, Natalians and Capetonians have stood in line to stake their claims on historical, geographical, economic and moral grounds to the land between the Umzimkhulu and Umzimvubu rivers. This 120 year-long controversy over the area, which came to be known as no-man's-land, appeared to be settled when on April 1, 1978 it was transferred to the Cape from Natal.

There are even greater arguments for this view today, because all who live there feel they belong to Natal.

Members of the Commission were not prepared for the opposition they encountered after they made their recommendation that the Umzimkhulu and

Mount Currie districts be incorporated into a new Eastern Cape/Kei region.

Speaker after speaker from Umzimkhulu called for the area to be excised from

Transkei, and not a voice was raised in favour of its continued inclusion. Pleas were even made by delegations representing areas deep within the heart of

Transkei who wanted to break their ties with the region and join Natal. These

delegations were hoping to put pressure on the Commission to reverse its earlier thinking and consider moving the border between Natal and Transkei southwards instead of northwards.

One delegation, in particular, that wanted to extend the border between Natal and the Transkei southwards was led by Chief Justice Mpondombini Sigcau, the traditional leader of an estimated 1.6 million people who live in East Â° Pondoland. East Pondoland covers a large tract of Transkei between the Umzimvubu River and Natal, taking in towns like Mount Ayliff, Bizana and Lusikisike. Chief Justice Sigcau stated very bluntly that the future of their

people lay with their brothers and sisters in Natal. Pondo chiefs went so far as to send a delegation to meet President FW de Klerk to reject the proposed incorporation of Pondoland into the East Cape Province - a demand they wanted guaranteed before the proposed April 27 elections.

The voice of the people in the region is clear. The Commission was given a strong message from principal chiefs, headmen, councillors, farmers and advisors of the people of the Umzimkhulu district: they wanted their region to be incorporated in KwaZulu/Natal. And this preference is supported by strong arguments from an economic, physical and social interest perspective.

The entire physical infrastructure in this region is orientated towards KwaZulu/Natal. All rail links, the harbour and the airport which serve the region, including the telephone network and the electricity network, are situated or linked to KwaZulu/Natal, and are dependent on KwaZulu/Natal for their maintenance and further expansion.

From an economic perspective, during the time East Griqualand was part of the Cape, there was little or no development: it was difficult to administer the region from so far away in Cape Town. When it was incorporated into Natal, the boom began and all the towns experienced considerable growth.

Change in East Griqualand's status as a part of Natal would mean years of hard work and crucial economic development wasted. Most agricultural products are marketed through the main centres in KwaZulu/Natal, and 70% of supplies for the Mount Curry area come from the Pietermaritzburg, Durban and PWV area, as opposed to less than 10% of supplies coming into the area from the Umtata, East London direction.

In addition to this, all the organisations representing producers in the area are linked to KwaZulu/Natal, for example your union, The Natal Agricultural

Union, as well as The Cane Growers Association, the Chamber of Business,
and so on.

The IFP strongly believes that the incorporation of the area into Transkei will
have a serious negative effect on investor confidence and growth in the area.

According to John Vos, the Vice-Chairman of the Association of Joint Services
Board of KwaZulu/Natal, the Commission's unsubstantiated recommendations
have already cost the area investment, with two major financial houses
revaluing their assets in the region in the light of possible inclusion in the
Eastern Cape/Kei.

Gentlemen, let us not delude ourselves about the real purpose of this battle concerning the boundary line of East Griqualand. To the ANC it does not matter what the people in the region want. Even strong economic and infrastructural arguments are expedient when it comes to the ANC and what they intend to do. No regard, whatsoever, will be given to any practical considerations should the ANC control South Africa from an all-powerful central government.

In return for harbouring ANC MK operatives in Transkei, and in return for using Transkei as a springboard for attacks against the IFP in KwaZulu/Natal,

the ANC want to return Bantu Holomisa's favours by delivering East Griqualand to the Transkei, thereby satisfying Holomisa's territorial ambitions. The ANC's opposition to regional interests must also be understood in terms of the threat KwaZulu/Natal holds for its political status in this region. The ANC believes that a smaller, less populous Natal/KwaZulu would dilute that threat. The ANC's manipulation of the national negotiation process was clear from the recommendations of the Commission, which flew in the face of every one of its own criteria which were to have been considered in drawing up regional

boundaries, such as economic viability and the need to minimise dislocation of services and inconveniencing the people.

The preconceived political objectives of the Commission were blatantly obvious

to all those present at the hearings in September. The sitting of the Commission in Kokstad was a farce - the outcome had already been pre-determined by the ANC/SACP government-in-waiting. Only five of the 15 commissioners had even bothered to arrive in Kokstad to hear the people of

East Griqualand, with two of them arriving late for the hearing.

The Commission's flagrant disregard for regional interests in the demarcation of boundaries is only the beginning of a process which is to be set in motion with the ANC/SACP/South African Government-dominated Transitional Executive Council.

The Transitional Executive Council is to play the role of interim government until the ANC/SACP Alliance dominated Constituent Assembly is established following next April's proposed elections. Under the reported guise of levelling the political playing fields the Transitional Executive Council has

been vested with the over-arching powers to dismantle what regional government structures exist, not excluding the KwaZulu Government.

The first half of the IFP's struggle in the negotiation process has been to oppose the treachery of the ANC/SACP Alliance and the South African Government, who are intent on entrenching centralised power in their favour. During the past months the IFP and KwaZulu Government has done everything in its power to fight for concessions for the people in the regions. As a leader of one of the largest political organisations in South Africa, I will never subject my supporters to a future of continued dictatorial, one party rule.

The IFP recognises the vital importance of entrenching devolved power now, before a final constitution is drawn up. This would ensure that our future constitutional model will be a power-sharing one, giving as much autonomy as possible for local and regional government to act in the interests of small communities and regions.

The second half of our struggle must begin now, and I am asking you for your support in this process. Together, with a united voice the people of Natal/KwaZulu, including East Griqualand, must oppose the present draft constitution.

Together we must refuse to be drawn into an election for a Constituent Assembly in a two-phase process, which allows the party that wins the first election to go home carrying the right to determine the future of this country alone. The IFP and KwaZulu Government will not make an illegitimate, unrepresentative and undemocratic constitution legitimate by participating in an election which will bring it into force.

If the ANC/South African Communist Party Alliance and the South African Government do not hear our call for freedom, justice, and democracy, we will fight them every inch of the way and put a stop to their destruction of our

country. South Africa belongs to all that live in it. It is not the domain of one or two political organisations alone. For all the ANC/SACP's and South African Government's intentions, it is the intention of the IFP to gain the right to freedom and self-determination for all South Africans that will pave the way for democracy in this country.

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KWAZULU GOVERNMENT SERVICE
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