

25 Henry Street, Grahamstown 6140

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Dear Agneta,

How are you? Very well, I hope, back with your family again. And I also hope, not too busy, so that you can work something up on this Glenmore material. Don Pinnock was sending you stuff including film. (Also he was sending the Grahamstown Voice edition on the UDF launch, with you in the front-page picture.) And I was to send copies of all that background stuff on Glenmore. At last, here it is.

Things have developed faster at Glenmore since you left than they did in all the five years people have been at that transit camp. Partly because Koornhof (the outgoing Minister of Co-operation & Development) confirmed in Parliament on 20 June that the Glenmore group are definitely due to be moved to Peddie. But mainly, I am convinced, as a result of our visit to Glenmore that Sunday - that trip which seemed such a useless and even damaging mess at the time, with the drunken interpreter. You will be amazed at this and maybe you won't agree either. But a direct result of our discussion with Mr Zahe was that from May onwards representatives from Glenmore have gone with us to Mgwali/Wartburg on those visits:

In May and June, they attended the monthly prayer services on removal at Wartburg organised by the Mgwali Residents' Association. These monthly services are held in lieu of meetings to resist removal into the Cis'ei because those meetings are banned in the area. They saw for themselves how strongly these communities can develop a stand even under extreme harassment. Also that people MUST unite and organise together on issues that affect them, and that is the only way to fight removal. The Glenmore people even spoke in the church, and returned inspired, saying that this was a historic ~~struggle~~ for them. They had

They had never held any general meetings for residents in Glenmore ever since people came to the camp in 1979. Partly perhaps because they were so very demoralised. But mainly because people had been forced into Glenmore from two different communities (Klipfontein / Kenton and Coega/Colchester) and the hardships in Glenmore tended to make these two factions clash so that ~~no~~ nobody could get everyone together. Their residents' committee had always been ineffectual, mainly because there was at least one member who really served the interests of the Administration Board and not the people. And the superintendent had felt so threatened by the residents that he thwarted the efforts that were made to have meetings. You can't quote this, but people in Glenmore have said it was the superintendent who called in the Cis'ei security police in July 1983 when the residents had invited us to a general meeting - it was to have been a report-back after the SPP survey we did, and we were also going to show a slide-tape analysis on removals and resistance. Quite a few people were held and roughly questioned, and the community were scared about any meetings after that. Even when the

urgent business of the rations being embezzled came to a head, they didn't have any meetings. They did try a bit, but the superintendent made things difficult and they backed down. Why has he been so repressive? Again you can't quote this, but many people both in and out of Glenmore are convinced that Strauss the superintendent was in the thick of the embezzling himself.

Now, as a direct result of seeing how the people of Mgwali and Wartburg managed to meet even when meetings were BANNED, the Glenmore group were determined to start meetings of their own.

Also ~~in~~ on 11 July some Glenmore people accompanied us to Mgwali for a special service. Dieter Trautwein (Saalgasse 17, 6000 Frankfurt 1; Tel 28 73 88) was here from Germany, and visited Mgwali because members of some of his church congregations had wanted to stand in support of the Mgwali resistance particularly - after all, they were to be moved to a camp called Frankfurt in Cis'el and they wanted to serve a particular community, so this seemed the most appropriate one. The day was a valuable one, even BECAUSE of harassment. We were to have picked up Alf Dlamini from Peddie - by the time we arrived, the Cis'el security police had already picked him up. They detained him for 8 hours that day so that he couldn't attend the service in Mgwali. There were road bloc's all over the place, a both Cis'el and RSA. We ourselves encountered two Cis'el bloc's and one RSA one, all bristling with submachine guns and security men, and on the way home we were formally escorted for 70 km from the Frankfurt turnoff to Peddie. But nothing stopped the service - the church was packed. Representatives from Newlands, another bloc' spot in the White Corridor with c. 16 000 people threatened with removal to Cis'el, spoke in the service. Altogether there was a feeling that a lot can be achieved if people do EVERYTHING they can. The connections with the German community were made. Glenmore now also hopes to have a support community somewhere outside South Africa. It seemed to be a day when people got a new sense of their wider horizons. This above all is encouraging for those who - as you saw for yourself at Glenmore - ~~and~~ are so very isolated. The isolation is a natural fact of these camps but it is also strategic - and so it is strategic to fight that isolation. People get their morale back when they feel they are part of a wider world. That their removal and position is part of a national story, that their resistance is in company with many other groups that they can join forces with and share ideas, that they must formulate and stand by their ~~rights and~~ opinions and generally express their human rights whatever the authorities including the laws say. It gives them dignity and a powerful sense of purpose.

Well, after that memorable day nothing would stop them! On 17 July Glenmore had its first general public meeting to discuss Koornhof's statement of 20 June that they were due for removal to Peddie. The community have now told the RSA government that nobody wants to go to Peddie. Having taken that stand, other support groups can now form up around this. I haven't got a copy of their own letter to Koornhof, but enclose an appeal they made to the Progressive Federal Party MP for Albany, E K Moorcroft, which is on largely the same lines. I include the list they enclosed which shows that practically every household has joined the stand against removal to Peddie. There were just 500 shack's at Glenmore originally, a few dozen more seem to have been put up and numbered since 1979, and you can see the house numbers on the list. It is a comprehensive tally of the township.

Now the people ^{are to} have a general meeting ~~every~~ on the first Tuesday of every month. They had one this month, August.

What Glenmore people want is clear: they want to go home from Glenmore. RSA will never let that happen but the people might decide to stand on that demand whatever happens. Or they might go on to some compromise course. Their views are not really known at this stage, by outsiders anyway. Some people leading the general discussion in Glenmore are considering pushing for a permanent site near Glenmore with jobs/agricultural land. Their principle is that a move must not make them worse off, they shouldn't suffer in the process. RSA has tacitly acknowledged it moved them into a position where they could not survive when it forced them to Glenmore - why else has the RSA government been dishing out rations in the camp since 1979? So a move must be one that provides them with a viable base for living, they must be BETTER OFF.

We got wind of another plan being proposed to the Ciskei - something along the lines of a new, permanent base in the Glenmore area instead of the move to Peddie where facilities are already grossly overextended, and there is no work. This seemed very interesting, especially as it agreed with the thinking of at least some of the Glenmore people, and a reporter followed the lead up for us. We heard today that Lee Joffe, adviser on planning in this area to the Ciskei government, has recently recommended that the Glenmore residents be given small irrigation plots somewhere in the area where they are now. The Ciskei are expected to decide about this sometime next week.

The question of what to fight for is such a vexed one, though. You see, the Glenmore people were pushed into the area, pushed over the Fish River into Ciskei territory and no matter what they are called they don't accept that business of Ciskei citizenship at all. (Well, who really does except for those profiting by it?) We are South Africans, not Ciskeians, they say. So however acceptable the package looks, would ANY alternative site and conditions be really acceptable if it means staying in the Ciskei area? This is not just theoretical. The immediacies of life in Ciskei are all too plain. What the RSA give one month can be withdrawn by Ciskei the next, or eroded in its value by other factors. And the terrible crux is that Glenmore can only negotiate once with RSA, on the basis that RSA must see them right after landing them in a position where they couldn't survive. Once RSA has shuffled them off - and that is what the next move will entail - it need never respond to any parliamentary questions on Glenmore again, for instance. Not that the parliamentary line etc. amounts to much, and from September it will be bankrupt as never before, under the new constitution. The conspiracy of separation, exclusion and silence will be pretty well perfected.

It is a pity the Glenmore people have not had the experience of regular community discussion and planning, because they need incredible corporate maturity now.

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Please Agneta, liaise with Dr Trautwein. Glenmore needs a support group now, for publicity, funds and general moral support. Maybe he can find a good group in Germany, otherwise perhaps you might find one in Sweden?

And will you tell us any developments your side, as soon as possible? I will acknowledge anything from you IMMEDIATELY, so if you don't hear from me it means it was confiscated in the post and you must send another copy at once, or even phone. Regards to you and your David.