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IN A COLONIAL SOCIETY, 1848-1877

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THE HLUBI AND NGWE IN A COLONIAL SOCIETY

1848 - 1877

ANDREW HAYDEN MANSON

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ABSTRACT

In 1800 the Hlubi people occupied territory around the upper Mzinyathi river in south-east Africa. In about 1819 or 1820 they were displaced from this area following the disturbances caused by the war between Shaka and Zwide. In the late 1820s the main house of the Hlubi returned to the Mzinyathi/Ncome rivers and began to re-group under Dlomo, and later, under Langalibalele, under the overall authority of the Zulu kings, Shaka and Dingane. In the 1840s Langalibalele appeared to gain firmer control over the increasingly powerful and independent Hlubi chiefdom.

In 1848 the Zulu paramount, Mpande apparently attempted to assert his control over the Hlubi and their neighbours, the Ngwe, and the leaders of the two chiefdoms decided to migrate into what was becoming a British colony of white settlement.

Here the Hlubi and Ngwe had to make adaptations to colonial rule at every level of their society. The commoners had to gain access to land and had to come to terms with their white neighbours, who sought their labour, and with the Government, which imposed taxes on them and attempted to bring them under colonial authority. The chiefs and elders had to adjust to a new order that attempted to use chiefs and headmen as its agents in the control of Natal's Black population. They also sought ways to maintain power over their own adherents.

For the Hlubi and Ngwe commoners the effects of these adjustments was that many of them, in the 1850s and 1860s, were incorporated into the colonial economy and were becoming 'proto-peasants', wage labourers, or even migrant labourers. For Langalibalele and the Ngwe chiefs it meant, on the one hand, a dissipation of their power as their subjects were enmeshed in the colonial economy, and on the other hand it led to frequent altercations with the Government whenever they attempted to exert their authority.

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These developments were given emphasis by the discovery of diamonds in 1867 which provided a larger and more lucrative market for peasant producers and wage-labourers. However it also intensified competition between Blacks and whites in the Weenen district and some white farmers became angered by the economic success of the Hlubi and Ngwe. The migration of many Hlubi and Ngwe to the diamond fields placed increased strain on their society because it further reduced the power of the ruling hierarchies. Langalibalele's attempts to come to terms with this situation were made even harder by the determination of the authorities in the early 1870s to force more Africans into the labour market during a period of economic upswing, and to more thoroughly control the Black population of Natal.

A quarrel between the Hlubi and the authorities in 1873 was apparently used as a pretext by some white settlers to foment a conflict which in turn was seized upon by the Government to dispossess the Hlubi and their innocent neighbours, the Ngwe, and to break up a powerful and independent chiefdom. At the same time the Natal Government realised that it could force several thousand Africans into the labour market, and possibly partially moderate settler demands for labour in northern Natal.

Owing to the efforts of a handful of whites in Natal the events which took place in Natal became known to the British public and the Home Government was forced to intervene. However for reasons of self-interest, the British Government did not right the wrongs that had taken place, nor did it fulfill its pledges in regard to the two chiefdoms. Many of the Hlubi and Ngwe were scattered throughout Natal and became clients of other groups or were forced to seek work with whites. Their locations were reduced in size and their leadership structures destroyed for many years. The relatively independent and powerful Hlubi chiefdom was brought under the domination of the colonial authority and the thriving peasantry of the Hlubi and Ngwe was destroyed by the Natal Government's actions between 1873 and 1875.



Chief Langalibalele with seven of his sons, as prisoners in Natal, 1874. Siyepu, Langalibalele's successor, on his left.

(Acknowledgements: National Archives, Pietermaritzburg).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have offered assistance in the writing of this thesis, and it is unfortunately impossible to name them all. My greatest debt of gratitude is to my supervisor, Mr. J.B. Wright, for his thoughtful guidance and valuable criticism. I am also grateful to Professor J.A. Benyon for encouragement and assistance. Thanks should be extended to the staff of the National Archives, Pietermaritzburg, the Killie Campbell Africana Library, Durban, and the University of Natal Library, Pietermaritzburg. I am particularly indebted to Dr. A. Schiele, formerly of Emmaus Mission Station, who translated sections of the *Missionsberichte* for me. Thanks are due to Rev. H.G. Lunning, Senior of the Evangelical Lutheran Mission for attempting to obtain copies of material housed in the Hermannsburg Mission Archives in Hermannsburg, W. Germany and to Mr. W. Shandu and Mr. F. Hadebe of the Emphangweni and Bhekuzulu Community Schools for the uncovering of source material and for a tour of Hlubi 'country'. Mr. J. Wright kindly lent me a manuscript of part of the James Stuart Archive (ii) (in press). Maps were drawn by Mr. B. Martin and Ms. M. Kuyper, of Natal University, Pietermaritzburg. Thanks are also due to Ms. D. Collins, who assisted in proof-reading and to Mrs. F. Serfontein who typed the thesis.

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This dissertation is entirely the author's own work, except where indicated in the text or footnotes, and has not been submitted to any other University.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes and text.

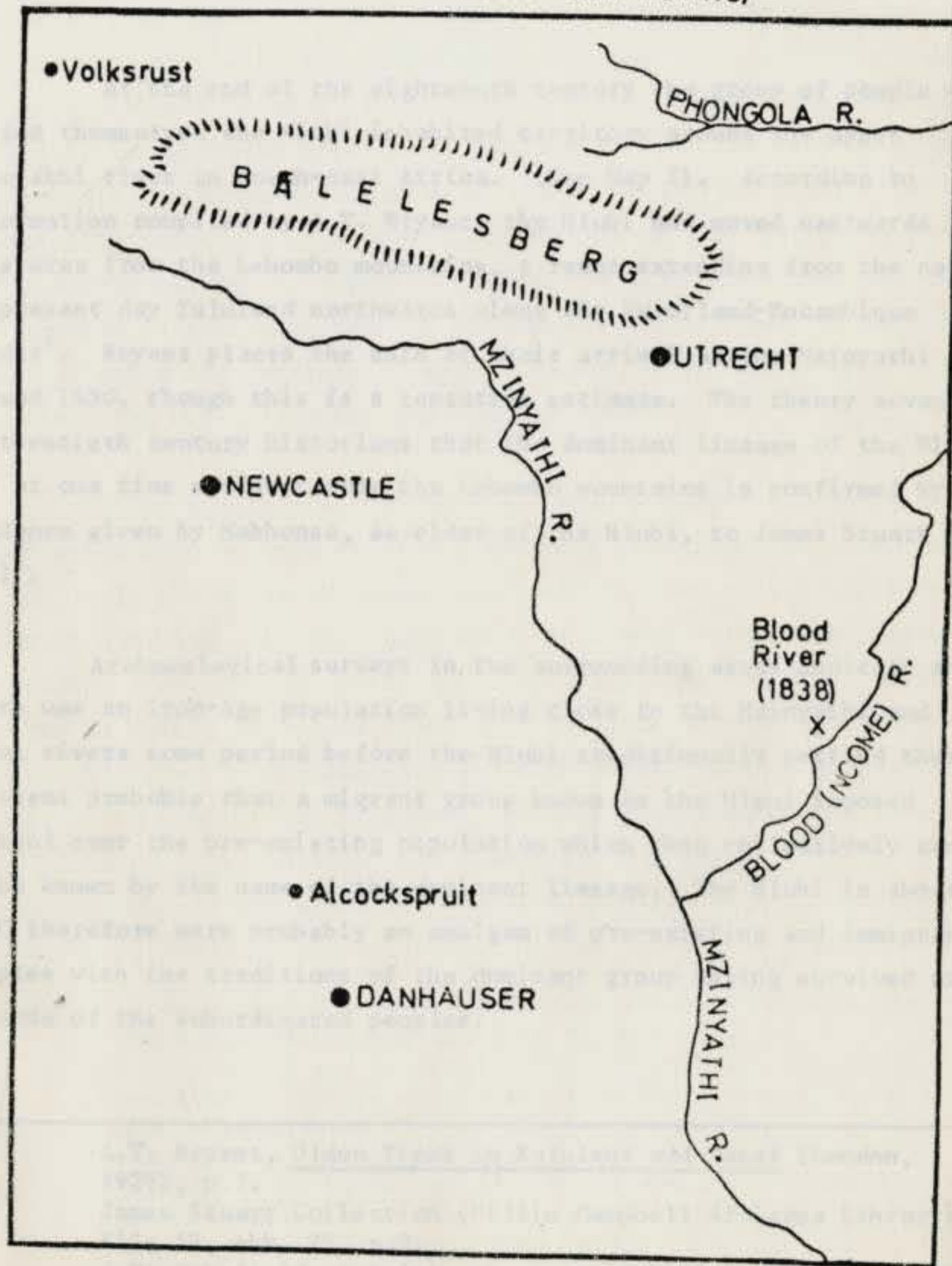
BMS	Berlin Missionary Society
BPP	British Parliamentary Papers
CSO	Colonial Secretary's Office
GH	Government House
HMS	Hermannsburg Missionary Society
KCAL	Killie Campbell Africana Library
NA	Natal Archives
NBB	Natal Blue Book
(N)GG	(Natal) Government Gazette
NPP	Natal Parliamentary Papers
O.F.S. O.H.S.A. R.M.	Orange Free State Oxford History of South Africa. Resident Magistrate
SNA	Secretary for Native Affairs

Note: Spelling

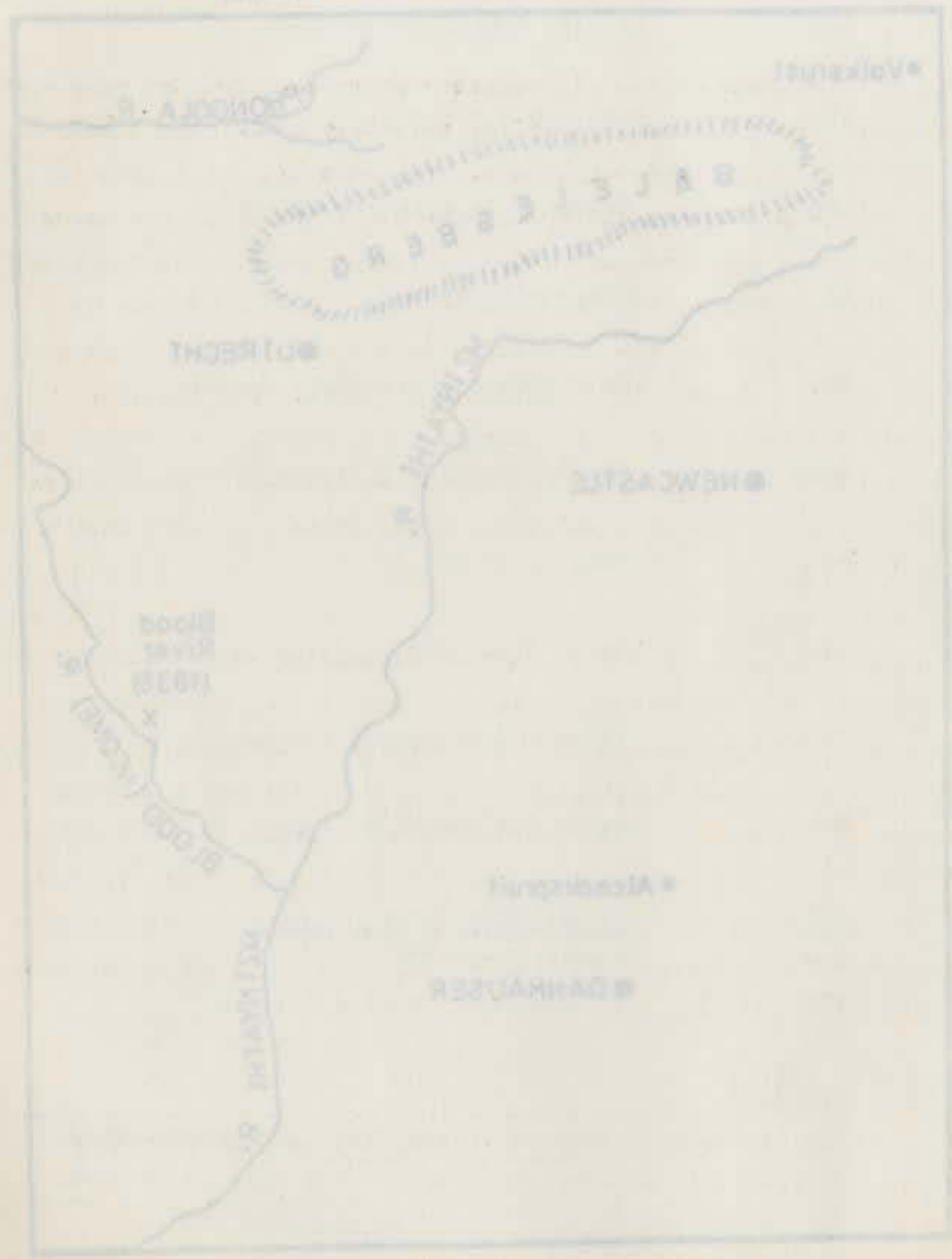
The spelling of Zulu words and names has been standardised according to modern orthography. For example the name Putile, Putili, Putini, has been standardised to Phuthini.

MAP I

HLUBI 'HOMELAND' PRE-1848
(SHOWING PRESENT-DAY TOWNS)



MAP I
HLUBI HOMELAND, PRE-1848
(SHOWING PRESENT-DAY TOWNS)



CHAPTER ONE

THE HLUBI AND NGWE BEFORE 1848

At the end of the eighteenth century the group of people who called themselves the Hlubi inhabited territory around the upper Mzinyathi river in south-east Africa. (See Map I). According to information compiled by A.T. Bryant, the Hlubi had moved eastwards into this area from the Lebombo mountains, a range extending from the north of present day Zululand northwards along the Swaziland-Mocambique border¹. Bryant places the date of their arrival at the Mzinyathi around 1650, though this is a tentative estimate. The theory advanced by twentieth century historians that the dominant lineage of the Hlubi was at one time resident near the Lebombo mountains is confirmed by evidence given by Mabhonsa, an elder of the Hlubi, to James Stuart in 1902².

Archaeological surveys in the surrounding areas indicate that there was an Iron-Age population living close to the Mzinyathi and Ncome rivers some period before the Hlubi traditionally settled there³. It seems probable that a migrant group known as the Hlubi imposed control over the pre-existing population which then collectively came to be known by the name of the dominant lineage. The Hlubi in about 1800 therefore were probably an amalgam of pre-existing and immigrant peoples with the traditions of the dominant group having survived at the expense of the subordinated peoples.

1. A.T. Bryant, Olden Times in Zululand and Natal (London, 1929), p.7.
2. James Stuart Collection (Willie Campbell Africana Library), File 59, nbk. 29, p.2.
3. J.F. Schofield, Primitive Pottery (Cape Town, 1948), p.159, T. Maggs, 'Some recent radio-carbon dates for eastern and southern Africa', Journal of African History, vol. XVIII, no. 2 (1977), pp.177-183.

Mabhonsa was adamant that the Hlubi were not related to the Nguni⁴, a term given by Bryant and J.H. Soga, the first writers who attempted to classify the inhabitants of South-east Africa, to those people who lived in the coastal regions of Southern Africa and who spoke a similar language and shared features of a common culture⁵. Mabhonsa claimed that the Hlubi had close links with the Sotho and Swazi people, which is probable in view of the tradition which places the area of origin of the dominant lineage as having been near the Lebombo mountains. Furthermore the close association of the Sotho and Swazi with the Hlubi is possibly indicated by such Hlubi practices as the wearing of the Sotho breech-cloth, which passed between the legs and around the waist (as opposed to the Nguni pendant or girdle worn in front and behind), and their allowing the marriage of cross-cousins, permissible under Swazi and Sotho law but infrequent among other groups⁶.

Soga classifies the Hlubi as Lala, a group of Iron-Age cultivators whom he regards as the earliest inhabitants of south-east Africa⁷. This suggestion seems improbable in view of the large body of evidence claiming that the Hlubi moved at a much later date onto the Mzinyathi. Yet another theory as to the origin of the Hlubi is put forward by Marks, who casts doubt upon the link between the Hlubi and the Swazi. She prefers to associate the Hlubi with the Ndebele people, who lived in the present-day Transvaal, because most genealogies reveal that two chiefs, Msi and Mhlanga, are common to both chiefly lines. A look at genealogies of the Hlubi and Transvaal Ndebele chiefs, compiled by Soga, Bryant and Van Warmelo, shows how she arrives at this hypothesis.

4. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.2.
 5. See S. Marks and A. Atmore, 'The problem of the Nguni: an examination of the ethnic and linguistic situation in South Africa before the Mfecane' in D. Dalby (ed.), Language and History in Africa (New York, 1970), p.120.
 6. Bryant, Olden Times, p.147; M. Wilson, 'The Nguni people', in M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.), Oxford History of South Africa, vol. I (Oxford, 1969), p.97.
 7. J.H. Soga, The South-Eastern Bantu (Johannesburg, 1930), p.78.

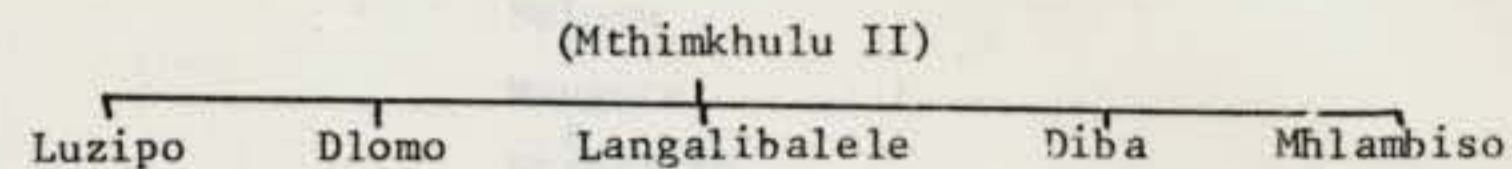
Southern Transvaal Ndebele⁸



Bryant's Genealogy of Hlubi Chiefs⁹

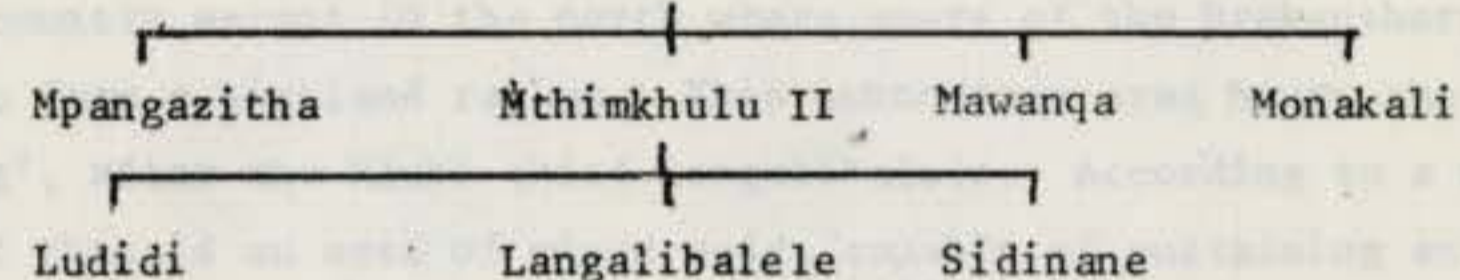


- 8. N.J. van Warmelo, Transvaal Ndebele Texts, Native Affairs Department, Ethnological Publications No. I (Pretoria, 1930), p.10,17. Magodongongo was contemporaneous with Mzilikazi, the Ndebele Chief.
- 9. Bryant, Olden Times, p.157.



Soga's Genealogy of Hlubi Chiefs¹⁰

Mhlanga
 Msi/Musi
 Mntungwa
 Ndlovu
 Dlamini I
 Mthimkhulu I
 Ncobo
 Dlomo
 Mashiya
 Ntsele
 Bhungane



Information on the origins of the Ngwe is even sparser than for the Hlubi. Bryant asserts that at the end of the eighteenth century they were living around the upper reaches of the Mkhuzi river in the present day Hlobane district. He describes them as "close cousins" of the Hlubi, with whom they shared the practice of wearing the Sotho breech-cloth¹¹. Bryant's genealogy of the Ngwe chiefly line is given below¹²:

- 10. From Soga, The South-Eastern Bantu, opp. p.402.
- 11. Bryant, Olden Times, p.181.
- 12. Ibid., p.182.

Mkeswa
 |
 Ndlovu
 |
 Mangete
 |
 Ntshotsho

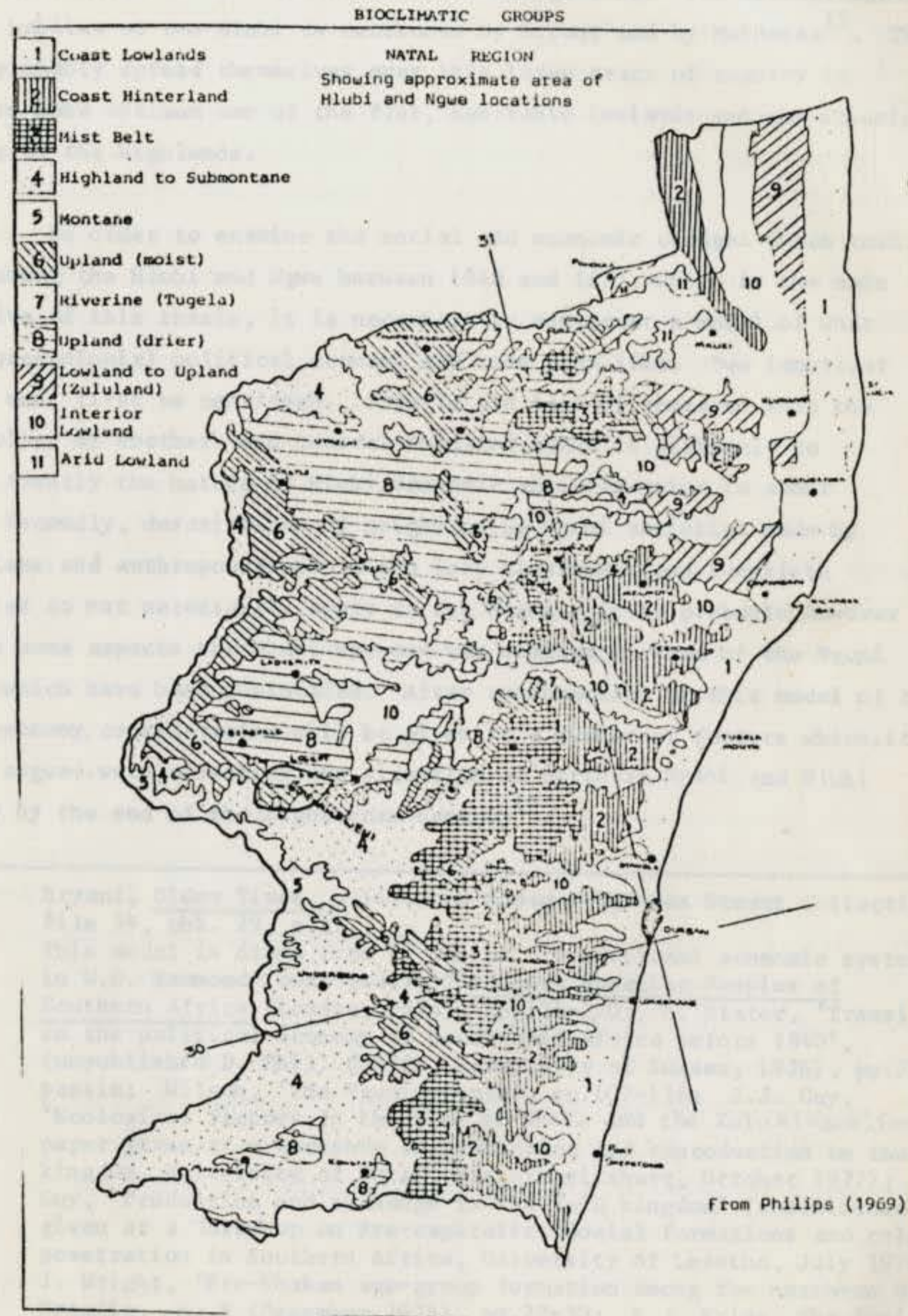
The Ngxanga people were adopted into the Ngwe at some unknown period, and after 1823 this fragment became the leading lineage. Mashoba was the chief of the Ngxanga and Phuthini was his son.

Whatever the nature of their links with other African groups in South-east Africa, the recorded oral traditions of the Hlubi and Ngwe indicate that by the end of the eighteenth century, the former lived in the present-day Utrecht and Newcastle districts of Natal on the upper Mzinyathi river, and the latter lived near the sources of the Mkhuze river in the north of present-day Zululand.

The area occupied by the Hlubi at this time is a flat, relatively unbroken country except in the north where spurs of the Drakensberg protrude to form a highland region. This submontane area bears the name 'Bal^{le}sberg', after the Hlubi chief Langalibalele. According to a modern assessment this is an area of mixed veld, "capable of sustaining animals all year around at a very low stocking rate"¹³. The annual rainfall is fairly low (600 - 800 mm) and summer droughts are frequent. The relatively low agricultural potential of this area has remained constant over the past 150 years although erosion has considerably reduced the quality of the soil¹⁴. The proximity of the submontane region to the north of

13. D.I. Bransby, 'The ecology of livestock production in Natal and Zululand', (unpublished paper given at a 'Workshop on production and re-production in the Zulu kingdom', University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1977). Information derived from J. Philips, 'The agricultural and related development of the Tugela Basin and its influent surrounds, Natal Town and Regional Planning Report, vol. 19, 1973, opp. p.20.
14. I am grateful to Mr. D.I. Bransby of the Department of Pasture Science, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, for information on the bioclimatic regions of Natal.

MAP 2



The Natal region was divided into 11 bioclimatic groups. The groups are defined by their altitude and climate. The groups are: 1. Coast Lowlands, 2. Coast Hinterland, 3. Hist Belt, 4. Highland to Submontane, 5. Montane, 6. Upland (moist), 7. Riverine (Tugela), 8. Upland (drier), 9. Lowland to Upland (Zululand), 10. Interior Lowland, 11. Arid Lowland.

The Natal region is a diverse area with a wide range of bioclimatic groups. The groups are defined by their altitude and climate. The groups are: 1. Coast Lowlands, 2. Coast Hinterland, 3. Hist Belt, 4. Highland to Submontane, 5. Montane, 6. Upland (moist), 7. Riverine (Tugela), 8. Upland (drier), 9. Lowland to Upland (Zululand), 10. Interior Lowland, 11. Arid Lowland.

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Utrecht (See Map 2) would presumably have allowed the Hlubi to move their cattle northwards to make use of early summer grazing. The extensiveness of the habitat of the Hlubi is mentioned by Bryant and by Mabhonsa¹⁵. The Hlubi probably spread themselves over this large tract of country in order to make optimum use of the flat, habitable lowlands and the superior grazing of the highlands.

In order to examine the social and economic changes which took place among the Hlubi and Ngwe between 1848 and 1877, which is the main objective of this thesis, it is necessary to construct a model of what their pre-colonial political economy may have been like. Two important points must first be mentioned. Firstly the lack of research into the archaeology of northern and central Zululand makes it difficult to assess clearly the nature of Hlubi economic activity prior to about 1800. Secondly, descriptions of neighbouring Nguni societies made by historians and anthropologists in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries do not necessarily apply to the Hlubi. It is probable however that in some aspects the Hlubi economy was similar to some of the Nguni models which have been postulated. After construction of this model of the Hlubi economy, consideration will be given to a number of factors which, it can be argued, were affecting the situation of northern Nguni and Hlubi society by the end of the eighteenth century¹⁶.

15. Bryant, *Olden Times*, p.147, and Map pp 698; James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.27.
16. This model is drawn from B. Sansom, 'Traditional economic systems', in W.D. Hammond-Tooke (ed.), *The Bantu Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa* (London, 1974), pp.135-170; H. Slater, 'Transitions in the political economy of south-east Africa before 1840', (unpublished D. Phil. thesis, University of Sussex, 1976), pp.71-92 passim; Wilson, 'The Nguni people', pp.107-116; J.J. Guy, 'Ecological factors in the rise of Shaka and the Zulu kingdom', (unpublished paper given at a Workshop on production and reproduction in the Zulu kingdom, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, October 1977); J.J. Guy, 'Production and exchange in the Zulu kingdom', (unpublished paper given at a Workshop on Pre-capitalist social formations and colonial penetration in Southern Africa, University of Lesotho, July 1976); J. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation among the northern Nguni Natalia, no. 8 (December 1978), pp.22-30; E.J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulus* (Pietermaritzburg, 1936), pp.184-216.

Economic life among the Hlubi centred on the production of staple crops, in particular sorghum, millet, pumpkins and a variety of beans. It is not known when maize was introduced to southern Africa but by the end of the eighteenth century it was being extensively grown in present-day Natal and Pondoland¹⁷. Tending these crops, and reaping them, was primarily the function of the women, though men would help in clearing new gardens or by breaking up hard surfaces. Care of livestock was generally the preserve of the males, boys undertaking the routine tasks such as watching over the herds, men being responsible for defending against predators, milking, slaughtering and the preparation of hides.

The men's other activities included hunting (where game was available), raiding cattle from other groups and defending their own cattle against raids, the creation of the material structure of the homestead and the manufacture of clothing, shields, hoes and other metal articles. Women were also involved in gathering, which, in the months immediately before reaping, would have been an important source of food. Exchange of certain products with nearby chiefdoms took place on an informal and small-scale basis.

In the Nguni economy, "the source of productive energy was almost entirely human"¹⁸. This labour power was obtained through the homestead, which was the basic production and consumption unit. The homestead was controlled by the homestead head who assumed a supervisory role over the activities of his wives and children. As the sons of this man reached adulthood so they were permitted to marry and form their own homesteads. These sons were obliged to take women from other homesteads, for the individual homestead could not supply its own wives. Thus a cluster of homesteads were formed, linked by kinship ties. Within these kinship groups there was a dominant lineage which provided the leadership of the group. The men of each homestead owed allegiance to the chief

17. Wilson, 'The Nguni people', p.109.
 18. Guy, 'Production and exchange', p.2.

of the group, to whom they were related by descent from a common ancestor. The chief was able to exert control over these homesteads by extracting tribute, paid in cattle or possibly in the form of labour. In return the chief re-distributed cattle to his followers, supervised important functions such as the initiation of the young men into adulthood, and officiated at major ceremonies.

The homestead was virtually self-sufficient except in the provision of wives. It is in this respect that cattle were important in Nguni society, for women could only be obtained through the exchange of cattle with other lineages. Conversely cattle could be obtained through the exchange of daughters of the homestead. In this manner, "the ultimate materialisation of surplus labour in cattle is an obvious consequence in an economic formation with few forms of storeable or alienable wealth"¹⁹.

Some of the difficulties of attempting to re-construct a model of the Hlubi political economy have been outlined above. Further cautions must also be mentioned. It must be emphasised that the description above is a simple model which takes little account of differences between localities or changes over time. It gives no idea of the changes that might have taken place in the availability of resources or in technology, nor does it take account of environmental changes or natural disasters. This model however, does provide a framework within which to examine transformations which, it has been argued, took place in the structure of northern Nguni society towards the end of the eighteenth century.

The causes of these transformations, which were to fundamentally transform the nature of African societies in southern Africa in the early nineteenth century, have been the subject of much debate among anthropologists and historians. Gluckman has posited that a growth in population in south-east Africa brought various chiefdoms into competition for land²⁰. Some

19. Ibid., p.5.
 20. M. Gluckman, 'The kingdom of the Zulu', in M. Fortes and F. Evans-Pritchard (eds.), African Political Systems (London, 1940), pp.25-26.

historians have focussed on the increased trading activities of the Europeans at Delagoa Bay which from the middle of the eighteenth century were supposed to have affected the peoples living beyond the Mfolozi river. Conflict supposedly developed between some of the chiefdoms of the interior of south-east Africa because they wished to control as large a share of this trade as possible²¹.

More recently however, a "number of scholars have been opening up promising new perspectives on northern Nguni history by focussing on aspects of changes in the local political economy"²². It has been suggested by Guy that there was an increasing scarcity of good land for grazing. Under these conditions, "there would be advantages in assuming political control over a larger area of land and an increased number of people"²³. If the powerholders in Nguni society could control more closely the processes of production and re-production, then there could be a more rational and efficient control over resources. Thus certain polities in south-east Africa tended, in this period of stress, towards political centralisation and tighter control over their subjects. The struggle for diminishing resources, and a correlation between the areas of political groupings and areas of favourable environment has also been suggested by Webb and Daniel. Hall has propounded the idea that the conflict which occurred in the region was precipitated by rainfall patterns which determined the locality of the struggles which took place, and intensified competition for resources in certain areas²⁴. Slater, from a different perspective, sees the crisis which affected south-east Africa at this time as resulting from the desire of the powerholders in Nguni states (which he sees as already existing by the mid-eighteenth century) to

21. A. Smith, 'The trade of Delagoa Bay in Nguni politics, 1750-1835', in L. Thompson (ed.), African Societies in southern Africa (London, 1969), pp.171-189.
 22. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation', pp.23-24
 23. Guy, 'Ecological factors', p.9.
 24. Cited in Guy, 'Ecological factors', pp.1-2.

gain control over the productivity of the "peasantry". The commodities produced under this controlled direction, such as ivory, were intended for exchange at Delagoa Bay²⁵.

A fundamental change was in the transformation of the functions of age-regiments or *amabutho*. Whereas previously it seems that *amabutho* had served primarily as circumcision sets during initiation ceremonies, by the early nineteenth century, over much of northern Nguni country, they were in the process of being "transformed into units with a wider range of socially important duties expected of them"²⁶. These *amabutho* served an essentially military purpose. However, the chief was able to place restrictions on the age that a man could marry and was consequently able to control reproduction among his followers. The formation of women's age-regiments would have allowed the chief even greater control over the regulation of marriage and the process of homestead formation. By delaying marriage the chief could not only control reproduction but he could also extract more labour from his subjects because the men of the *amabutho* were also obliged to work for the chief until such time as they were allowed to marry. The transformations in the function of *amabutho* seem to have only occurred among certain northern Nguni chiefdoms and it is difficult to assess how widespread was the phenomenon by the early nineteenth century.

Thus there was, as has already been noted, a centralisation of power, which was based in the last resort upon the diversion of a certain amount of labour power from production for the homestead to production for the central authority or the chief. This in turn led to a certain amount of stress between the powerholders and the commoners within Nguni society.

There is some evidence that certain important social changes were taking place among the Hlubi at the turn of the eighteenth century and

25. Slater, 'Transitions in the political economy of S.E. Africa', chapter 9.
26. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation', p.22, from Bryant, *Olden Times*, pp.641-642.

that they were creating stress within the chiefdom. According to Slater, the trade at Delagoa Bay in the mid-eighteenth century was in the hands of the Tembe, a Tsonga group which resided close to the coast. In about 1794, according to his argument, a number of northern Nguni groups, together with the Hlubi, capitalised on a civil war among the Tembe to break their hold over this trade. The independent and powerful groups of the Hlubi, the Ndwandwe and the Ngwane then struggled for control of the Delagoa Bay commerce²⁷.

According to Mabhonsa, at the beginning of the nineteenth century the Hlubi appear to have had close links with neighbouring groups such as the Dlamini and the Zizi. During this period Mthimkhulu took his chief wife from among the Ngwe people²⁸. Possibly these friendly relations, which Mabhonsa claims the Hlubi had with their neighbours, were an attempt to cement or form new political alliances during a period when rivalries between larger chiefdoms were becoming apparent. It must be borne in mind however that 'dynastic' marriages of this kind had long been common in Nguni society.

Some time after the death of Bhungane, which Bryant places at about 1800, there were political upheavals among the Hlubi. Mpangazitha, Mthimkhulu's brother, left the Mzinyathi with his followers and settled a greater distance away from Mthimkhulu, close to present-day Newcastle. Mabhonsa saw this event as a definite weakening of Hlubi power²⁹, but according to Soga, although Mpangazitha was "independent" from his brother, they united in times of danger³⁰. Mpangazitha's separation

27. Slater, 'Transitions in the political economy of S.E. Africa', pp.267-269.
 28. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, pp.28-29, 41-42.
 29. Ibid., p.39.
 30. Soga, The South Eastern Bantu, p.409.

from Mthimkhulu confirms the impression, also shared by Soga and Bryant³¹, that the Hlubi chiefdom even in the first decade of the nineteenth century was large but disunited and uncohesive.

However about the same time that Mpangazitha moved away from the Mzinyathi, Mthimkhulu apparently took steps to tighten his control over his adherents. There had been no "regiments" in Bhungane's time but Mthimkhulu formed at least one male *ibutho*³² and two female *amabutho*³³. He also introduced the practice of wearing headrings which were worn to indicate that a man had reached the age of circumcision. It has been suggested that in other Nguni groups this usually implied that the chief was delaying circumcision among his men to an age where it was both impractical and physically dangerous to circumcise men. This occurred in conditions where elders were seeking to extend the scope of their authority over younger men by prolonging the period when a man was still considered a youth³⁴. However as circumcision was apparently still practised among some of the Hlubi after 1820, there is some doubt that the wearing of headrings indicated a complete termination of circumcision among them³⁵.

An event which occurred just after the end of the eighteenth century suggests that the Hlubi, by this time, at least, had become a people of significant status in south-east Africa. According to several accounts, Godongwana (later Dingiswayo), fled from the Mthethwa and took shelter among the Hlubi. Godongwana was the leader of one of the rival factions that competed for power among the Mthethwa following the death of Jobe. The fact that he sought sanctuary among the Hlubi suggests to Slater that

31. Ibid., Bryant, *Olden Times*, p.147.
32. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, evidence of Mabhonsa.
33. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation', p.24, from James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, evidence of Mabhonsa on sheet attached to front cover.
34. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation', p.21.
35. Ibid.

[Faint, mostly illegible text on the left page, appearing to be bleed-through or very light print.]

31. Slater, 'The Hlubi in the political economy of the 18th century', p. 147.
32. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, evidence of Mabhonsa.
33. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation', p. 24.
34. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation', p. 21.
35. Ibid.

the Mthethwa could have been, at one time, a vassal state of the Hlubi or a Hlubi lineage³⁶. Another explanation of his arrival is that Godongwana came to ask the Hlubi about chieftainship. "When you overcame the nations, how did you do it?" he is alleged to have asked the Hlubi chief³⁷. Despite the fissiparous tendencies of the Hlubi chiefdom, it appears that the Hlubi were still a powerful and independent polity for Godongwana would presumably never have asked for their protection had they been weak. The Hlubi gave Godongwana both land and cattle. Traditionally they were given to him for his bravery in killing a lioness singlehanded³⁸, though it is more likely that these gifts were given as a recognition of his status and as a form of political strategy.

It was at this point, according to tradition, that certain white men appeared among the Hlubi. The origins of this party and the supposed consequences of its arrival in south-east Africa have been recounted and discussed elsewhere³⁹. For the Hlubi its importance seems to lie in the fact that these white men appeared to spend a long time with Mthimkhulu⁴⁰. If they were traders or hunters the long sojourn with the Hlubi could have been a recognition of Hlubi paramountry in this region of south-east Africa, and of the need to gain Mthimkhulu's sanction for their activities.

Despite these indications that the Hlubi were by 1800 a group of some power, and despite a certain tendency among them to political centralisation, it must be kept in mind that the Hlubi chiefdom seemed to lack the same degree of centralised political authority that characterised some northern Nguni groups such as the Ndwandwe.

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- 36. Slater, 'Transitions in the economy of S.E. Africa', p.270 + n
 - 37. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.4, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 - 38. Bryant, *Olden Times*, p.87. Mabhonsa's version is that he milked a lioness; James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.4.
 - 39. S. Marks, 'The "Nguni", the Natalians and their history', *Journal of African History*, vol. VIII (1967), p.536; J.D. Omer-Cooper, *The Zulu Aftermath: A Nineteenth Century Revolution in Bantu Africa* (Evanston, 1966), p.28.
 - 40. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.55, evidence of Mabhonsa.

Mpangazitha, brother of Mthimkhulu, fled into Sotho-occupied territory on the highveld while another brother, Mahwanqa, took refuge in the Mhlongamvula mountain (in present day south-eastern Transvaal). One semi-autonomous group under Hawane hid out in a stronghold in the extreme north of Hlubi country; while another group under Ngalonkulu fled to the area of modern Bloemfontein, and a separate group to the eastern Transvaal⁴⁵. Another group of people remained near the Mzinyathi and *khonza'd* (gave allegiance to) the Zulu king. Dlomo, Mthimkhulu's heir, together with his mother and a younger brother, Langalibalele, sought refuge with the Ngwe under Phuthini near the sources of the Mkhuze river. They were joined here by other members of the Hlubi⁴⁶.

Consideration will now be given to the fortunes of the principal sections of the Hlubi between (roughly) 1822 and 1848. After Mpangazitha had led his followers onto the highveld, his son, Luzipho, led some of this section to the present day Standerton district of the Transvaal. Another small group made their way into the country of the Xhosa paramount Hintsa⁴⁷. However most of Mpangazitha's supporters followed him into Transorangia. Here they fell upon Sekonyela's Tlokwa, displacing them and settling for a period at Maboletla near the Caledon river, between modern-day Ladybrand and Ficksburg. Another attack on the Tlokwa led to the defeat of the Hlubi. However Mpangazitha remained at Maboletla. Between 1821-1823 the Ngwane under Matiwane were forced by Shaka's impis to cross the Drakensberg. Here they challenged the Hlubi and the Tlokwa for domination over the territory between the Caledon and Vaal rivers. For about two years these groups struggled to gain the upper hand, during which time Sotho groups in this area were dispersed or absorbed. In 1825 Mpangazitha made a mass attack on the Ngwane. After a fierce five day battle the Hlubi were completely defeated and Mpangazitha killed. Matiwane's Ngwane became the paramount power in Transorangia and many of Mpangazitha's people were

45. Ibid., pp.26-30, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 46. Bryant, Olden Times, p.60; Omer-Cooper, Zulu Aftermath, p.86.
 47. Bryant, Olden Times, p.150.

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1	James Stuart Collection, File 19, vol. 11, p. 11.
2	Bryant, <u>Olden Times</u> , p. 150.
3	Omer-Cooper, <u>Zulu Aftermath</u> , p. 86.
4	Stuart Collection, File 19, vol. 11, p. 11.

incorporated into his chiefdom.

A small section under Mehlokhulu, Mpangazitha's younger son, avoided incorporation and submitted to the Ndebele north of the Vaal. But Mzilikazi came to regard Mehlokhulu as a threat, and he and his followers fled to the country south-east of Moshweshwe's kingdom. Here they allied with the Bhaca under Ncaphayi, but a section of the Ndebele pursued them and defeated them, splitting the alliance and forcing Mehlokhulu to seek shelter with Moshweshwe. Bryant places the date of this event in 1833. In 1838 a section of these people rejoined their kinsmen at the Mzinyathi but it seems that the majority remained under Moshweshwe. Yet another section of Mehlokhulu's followers were established at a much later date (in the 1850s) by the British in the Herschel district of the Cape⁴⁸.

The men that remained at the Mzinyathi and *khonza'd* Shaka were apparently formed into a separate regiment by the Zulu king. This *ibutho*, known as the *iziYendane*, appears to have been a specifically Hlubi regiment and was not formed according to age, an interesting point which will receive attention later⁴⁹.

Thus by the 1830s, members of the original Hlubi chiefdom had become widely dispersed over southern Africa. Despite this, evidence from the following years makes it clear that members of the various segments were in close communication with each other.

After a period as a refugee, Ma'wanqa, Mthimkhulu's brother, attempted to re-group the main house of the Hlubi. He left what is now the south-eastern Transvaal and returned to the upper Mzinyathi. He

48. This account of the fate of the Hlubi under Mpangazitha is drawn from Omer-Cooper, *Zulu Aftermath*, pp.86-90; Thompson, 'Co-operation and conflict: the high veld', in *OHSA*, vol. I, pp.393-395; Bryant, *Olden Times*, pp.150-155; Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, pp.414-415; R.G. Rasmussen, *Migrant Kingdom, Mzilikazi's Ndebele in South Africa* (London, 1978), pp.52-56.
49. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.3, evidence of Mabhonsa; Bryant, *Olden Times*, p.148.

arranged for the return of Dlomo, Langalibalele and their mother to the Mzinyathi. Mahwanqa attempted to assume leadership of the Hlubi, yet he apparently lacked support and did not have the confidence to eliminate Dlomo, Mthimkhulu's rightful heir. Eventually a large section of the Hlubi instructed Mahwanqa to relinquish control of the chiefdom in favour of Dlomo. Mahwanqa refused and was subsequently killed, either by Dlomo or Dlomo's supporters⁵⁰. This event appears to have taken place a few years after Shaka had been killed by his half-brother Dingane, who assumed leadership over the Zulu kingdom in 1828.

Dlomo then travelled to the Zulu country to appear before Dingane, either on his own initiative or in response to a summons from the Zulu king. Whoever initiated the meeting, the result was that Dingane had Dlomo killed⁵¹.

The motives behind this killing require deeper analysis. Dingane had inherited a large kingdom from Shaka, the administration of which presented certain problems. While the Zulu chief exercised considerable powers in the central area of his kingdom, in the peripheral zones the chiefs of previously independent groups seem to have retained a certain degree of authority⁵². There was a constant danger that groups would secede from the kingdom, as in the case of the Qwabe in 1829. Dingane's intervention in Hlubi affairs may have been to prevent the re-formation of the large Hlubi chiefdom on the fringes of his kingdom. Conversely he may have been attempting to seek power over the Hlubi whom he envisaged as forming a defensive flank on his exposed north-western border, an area particularly vulnerable to attack from Mzilikazi's Ndebele, who raided in all directions from their homeland near the Apies river. By killing Dlomo, Dingane possibly hoped to install Langalibalele, who would prove co-operative in the defence of the Zulu kingdom.

50. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.60, evidence of Mabhonsa; Bryant, Olden Times, p.155.
 51. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 30, p.1, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 52. J. Omer-Cooper, 'Political change in the nineteenth century Mfecane', in Thompson (ed.), African Societies, pp.215-218.

If the latter was the case, Dingane's plan was not immediately successful. Dlomo's death opened the way to rivalry between his brothers, and Langalibalele, who seems to have been a young man of eighteen or nineteen at this time⁵³, was unable to instantly gain control over the Hlubi. After Dlomo's death, Langalibalele, to avoid danger, went to hide out at the Ncuba stream, near the sources of the Phongolo river, north of Hlubi territory. His younger brother Duba allegedly instigated a plot to have him killed by cannibals but Langalibalele escaped by swimming across the (Ncuba?) stream. Langalibalele then retreated further up the Ncuba before feeling confident enough to return southwards and settle at the Mpongo stream near present day Utrecht. Although Mabhonsa makes no reference to it, it is possible that Duba had been killed by Langalibalele's supporters, for Duba makes no further appearance in Hlubi history.

At the Mpongo Langalibalele appears to have assumed leadership of the Hlubi and to have begun slowly to build up his own power. According to Mabhonsa, Langalibalele *soka'd* (entered circumcision school) soon after Dlomo's death⁵⁴, but in view of his age it seems extremely unlikely that he was circumcised. He married immediately after, taking four wives and expanding his homestead which he called ePhangweni. One of Dlomo's regiments, the Mziwane, "went over to Langalibalele" during this period⁵⁵.

However his position was still threatened by various rivals. Mabhonsa tells of an attempt by Siwela, one of Phuthini's sons, to lay claim (without his father's support) to Langalibalele's territory. In the ensuing battle Siwela's force was routed by Langalibalele's, and Siwela had to escape into Zulu country. Langalibalele reported his presence there

53. According to James Stuart's estimate, Langalibalele seems to have been born C.1818. See James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.24, p.54+n.
 54. Ibid., p.36, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 55. Ibid., p.36, evidence of Mabhonsa.

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20. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.50, evidence of...
 21. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.51, evidence of...
 22. Ibid., p.52, evidence of...
 23. Ibid., p.53, evidence of...

to Dingane who allegedly despatched an impi to kill Siwela⁵⁶. This incident indicates that Langalibalele enjoyed the support of the Zulu king. Shortly afterwards, the Hlubi under Langalibalele were attacked by Mini, son of Mahwanqa, who had sought sanctuary with Sikonyela's Tlokwa after his father's death. The attack was easily repulsed although a large number of cattle were seized on the margins of Hlubi territory⁵⁷. These events seem to have occurred between the time of Dlomo's death (shortly after Shaka's death in 1828) and the battle at the Ncome (Blood) river between the Boers and the Zulu kingdom in 1838. Langalibalele, though still fairly young, was able to weather these challenges successfully and by about 1838 seems to have established himself as unrivalled leader of the Hlubi.

However events in south-east Africa were creating new problems for the Hlubi leaders. Groups of Boer farmers had, in the late 1830s, left the Cape in Trek parties, and under four leaders, Potgieter, Maritz, Uys and Retief, had crossed the Drakensberg in 1837⁵⁸. As pastoralists the Boers desired land and the Zulu king by 1838 had come to see the Trekkers as competitors. The need to avert this threat to the independence of his kingdom led Dingane to act swiftly in an attempt to destroy the Trekkers. The conclusion of this was the decisive confrontation at Blood river in 1838, where the Boers, with their superior weaponry, were able to inflict a severe defeat on the Zulu army⁵⁹. (See Chapter 2).

The confrontation between the Boers and the Zulu kingdom would have had a deep significance for the leaders of the Hlubi. The battle at

56. Ibid., pp.1-6, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 57. Ibid., p.9, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 58. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', pp.356-358.
 59. Ibid., pp.362-364.

... If the latter was the case, Dingane's plan was not immediately successful. Dlomo's death opened the way to a new phase in the history of the Hlubi. It is clear that there has been a great deal of change in the Hlubi since the death of Dlomo. The Hlubi have been able to gain control over the area at the Blood river, near the mouth of the Ncome river, and to gain control of the Hlubi territory. The Hlubi have been able to gain control over the area at the Blood river, near the mouth of the Ncome river, and to gain control of the Hlubi territory. The Hlubi have been able to gain control over the area at the Blood river, near the mouth of the Ncome river, and to gain control of the Hlubi territory.

At the time Langalibalele appears to have assumed leadership of the Hlubi and to have begun to build up his own power. According to Mabhonsa, Langalibalele's early career was marked by a number of successes. He was able to gain control over the area at the Blood river, near the mouth of the Ncome river, and to gain control of the Hlubi territory. The Hlubi have been able to gain control over the area at the Blood river, near the mouth of the Ncome river, and to gain control of the Hlubi territory.

56. Ibid., pp.1-6, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 57. Ibid., p.9, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 58. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', pp.356-358.
 59. Ibid., pp.362-364.

Blood river took place in the Hlubi homeland and the *iniYendane* (Hlubi regiment) fought on the side of the Zulu army⁶⁰. The Hlubi were able to observe at first hand the superior technology of the Boers.

The defeat also brought the divisions inherent in the Zulu state to the surface, and Mpande, Dingane's brother, entered into an agreement with the Boers to assist him in gaining control over the Zulu kingdom. In 1840 Mpande's forces defeated Dingane's regiments and Dingane was killed⁶¹. Mpande was now considered to be the vassal of the various Voortrekker groups in Natal and was forced to cede the land between the Thukela and the Black Mfolozi rivers to the Trekkers. These divisions in the Zulu kingdom, caused by the penetration of the Boers into south-east Africa, probably reduced the capacity of the Zulu central authority to control the peripheral areas of the kingdom.

The period between the arrival of the Boers in late 1837 and Mpande's victory in 1840 must have been critically important years for the leaders of the Hlubi. It was now possible to break free from Zulu hegemony and directly form new alliances with the Boers, who, after their defeat of the Zulu and the Ndebele (early in 1837) appeared to be the most dominant power in south-east Africa. However the Hlubi leaders did not consider it an opportune time to break free from Zulu overlordship. Langalibalele's youth, the disorganisation of the Hlubi polity and doubts as to whether the Boers would remain permanently in the region must have been crucial factors in the reasoning behind the decision not to *khonza* to one of the Boer groups.

60. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.36, evidence of Mabhonsa.
61. E. Brookes and C. de B. Webb, A History of Natal, (Pietermaritzburg, 1965), p.15,37.

Moreover during the 1840s there were further developments in the changing patterns of political power in south-east Africa that made the problems faced by the Hlubi leaders even more complicated. The Boers were defeated by the British in July 1842 and the area of Boer occupation between the Thukela and the Mzimkhulu rivers was annexed to the Cape Colony (See Chapter 2).

It must have been clear to the Hlubi leaders that whites were competing for the land between the Thukela and Mzimkhulu but it was not apparent, during the mid-1840s, whether the Boers or the British would control the region. The Hlubi must have been aware that to the north-west of them whites were interfering in the internal affairs of the Swazi. In 1846 a group of Orligstad Boers were supporting one of the rival factions contending for control of the Swazi state following the death of the Swazi king, Sobhuza⁶². Thus from 1838 there was a struggle for political power in south-east Africa which created uncertainty for the leaders of the Hlubi. The boundaries of political control in the region were changing and indistinct.

The relationship between the Hlubi and Mpande in the early 1840s is difficult to assess from the limited evidence available. As mentioned above the Hlubi remained vassals of the Zulu kingdom but the weakening of Zulu power seemed to allow them more autonomy than they had enjoyed under Dingane.

During the late 1830s and early 1840s Langalibalele took steps to centralise the Hlubi polity and to establish a closer control over his adherents. He moved his homestead eastwards, closer to the heartland of Hlubi territory⁶³, a move which can be interpreted as an attempt to facilitate his control over his subjects. He is reported by Mabhonsa as

62. P. Bonner, 'Factions and Fissions: Transvaal/Swazi politics in the mid-nineteenth century', *Journal of African History*, vol. XIX, no. 2 (1978), pp.218-228.
63. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.8, evidence of Mabhonsa.

having had eleven "age-regiments" under his authority as opposed to the one "regiment" allegedly established in Mthimkhulu's time⁶⁴. It has been posited above that Dingane probably regarded the Hlubi as a bulwark against Ndebele attacks and perhaps for this reason he sanctioned the creation of Hlubi *amabutho* under Langalibalele. However the formation of eleven *amabutho* also would have allowed Langalibalele to divert labour power into his service and to help establish his authority over the young men of his chiefdom, a measure to a large extent taken in response to the insecurities of the time.

Inevitably the Hlubi could not remain untouched by the jostling for political dominance in south-east Africa that was taking place in the 1840s between the Boers, the British and the Zulu kingdom (See Chapter 2). Late in 1847 Mpande launched an attack on the Hlubi and their neighbours the Ngwe, who were still ruled by Langalibalele's uncle, Phuthini. The blood relationship between the two leaders and the assistance given to Langalibalele and his mother by the Ngwe after the dispersal of the Hlubi in 1819 led to a close affinity between them, causing the Ngwe to be identified, from this time onwards, with the Hlubi. Accounts of this attack vary considerably. Bryant's sources, and Mabhonsa, claim that it was aimed at the Hlubi specifically. Mabhonsa sees Mpande's act as being in the nature of a raid, while Soga views it as an attempt to kill Langalibalele⁶⁵. The most credible motive for this attack seems to be that Mpande, like Dingane before him, was attempting to bring an increasingly powerful subordinate under his authority and to ensure recognition for Zulu paramountcy along the Mzinyathi.

The Hlubi and Ngwe managed to secrete their herds in the future Harrismith district of the Orange River Sovereignty, but the Zulu launched a second and more vigorous assault on the Hlubi and Ngwe about a month later (late in 1847 or early in 1848). The Hlubi allegedly sighted the

64. Ibid., pp.23-24.
 65. Ibid., nbk. 30, p.9; Bryant, Olden Times, p.155; Soga, The South-Eastern Bantu, p.421.

Zulu *impi en route* to the Mzinyathi on this occasion and were able, in the space of a night, to again move their cattle northwards. The *impi* pursued them but exhausted themselves and suffered losses at the hands of the Hlubi. The leader of the Zulu *impi* was subsequently killed for failing to achieve his objective⁶⁶, a possible pointer to the seriousness with which this operation was viewed by Mpande.

With the threat of another Zulu attack imminent, the leaders of the Hlubi and Ngwe had to decide quickly on a course of action. There were Boers to the north and west of them, the Zulu state to the east and the British to the south. Political conditions in the colony of Natal were still in a state of flux. In 1847, those Boers living in Natal just across the Mzinyathi had attempted to form themselves into a separate Republic under Mpande's protection⁶⁷. Although this so-called Klip River insurrection had virtually been suppressed by January 1848 it must have been clear to the leaders of the Hlubi and Ngwe that some Boers were still challenging British dominance in Natal. If the Hlubi and Ngwe leaders placed themselves under the jurisdiction of the Swazi state this would have obliged Langalibalele and Phuthini to *khonna* Mswati, the new Swazi king, who in 1848, according to Bryant, was about three or four years younger than Langalibalele⁶⁸. It would have been a particular indignity for Phuthini, a man far older than Langalibalele, to *khonna* the young Mswati.

During January and February 1848 the leaders of the Hlubi and Ngwe appeared to be contemplating the safest move they could make. Then in mid-March Langalibalele and Phuthini despatched messages to Martin West, the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, requesting permission to settle in the colony⁶⁹. It seems probable that the decision to move into Natal was largely the result of the Natal Government's known intention of allowing groups of

66. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 30, pp.9-10, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 67. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.63.
 68. Bryant, *Olden Times*, p.322.
 69. CSO 44, no. 37, Statement of Hadebe to T. Shepstone, 21 March 1848.

Africans who had entered the colony to settle on the land⁷⁰.

However West did not reply directly to these messages but sent to Mpande informing him that by endangering the peace of his subjects on the Natal-Zululand border, he was likely to cause a breach in relations between the Zulu kingdom and Natal⁷¹. Theophilus Shepstone, Diplomatic Agent to the Native Tribes in Natal, was instructed by West to visit the Klip River district of Natal to investigate the situation at first hand. While the Hlubi and Ngwe leaders waited for the Natal administration to come to a decision, some of their adherents crossed the Mzinyathi into the Klip River district where Shepstone found them squatting on the land of Boer farmers⁷². The administration's failure to act decisively in the case of the Hlubi and Ngwe was probably due to the arrival in Natal of Sir Harry Smith, the Governor of the Cape, in February 1848. Smith had thrown the Natal administration into confusion by dissolving West's Location Commission and appointing a Land Commission in its stead⁷³. (See Chapter 2). Thus in late July or early August 1848 the two chiefs took the initiative and crossed into Natal with most of their followers without receiving official permission from the Natal Government to do so⁷⁴. Claims made later that the Hlubi had been generously given sanctuary by the British authorities⁷⁵ do not receive confirmation in the official records.

Contrary to claims made years later by some Natal colonists⁷⁶ the Hlubi and Ngwe entered Natal in a state of relative prosperity. Their

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- 70. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, pp.59-60.
 - 71. EC 16, Message from West to Mpande, 23 March 1848.
 - 72. CSO 44, no. 39, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 22 April 1848.
 - 73. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, p.60.
 - 74. CSO (2) no. 60, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 7 August 1848.
 - 75. Anon., The Kafir Revolt in Natal in the Year 1873: Revolt of the Amahlubi Tribe Under the Chief Langalibalele (Pietermaritzburg, 1874), Introduction, p.iv.
 - 76. Ibid.

leadership structures were still intact, and Langalibalele claimed to have lost only one man in the course of the Zulu attack⁷⁷. Although a few cattle had been captured in the Zulu raid, most had been hidden in the Drakensberg foothills or in the Balelesberg spur north of the Mzinyathi and were eventually brought into Natal. Thus although the Hlubi and Ngwe had been expelled from their one-time homeland, and although they were placing themselves under the jurisdiction of an authority about which they knew relatively little, they had at their disposal the basic means with which to reproduce their social, economic and political systems.

77. CSO 44, no. 37, Statement of Hadebe to T. Shepstone, 21 March 1848.

... the Hlubi and Ngwe... the Zulu attack... leadership structures... intact... Langalibalele... claimed... lost only one man... course of the Zulu attack... Although a few cattle... captured... hidden in the Drakensberg foothills... Balelesberg spur north of the Mzinyathi... eventually brought into Natal... Thus although the Hlubi and Ngwe had been expelled from their one-time homeland... and although they were placing themselves under the jurisdiction of an authority about which they knew relatively little... they had at their disposal the basic means with which to reproduce their social, economic and political systems.

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CHAPTER TWO

A NEW ORDER (1848 - 49)

When the Hlubi and Ngwe crossed into Natal they entered a society that was profoundly different from the one that they were leaving. They were moving from the Zulu kingdom into a colony of the strongest imperial nation in the world. It is necessary, at this point, to outline the history of Natal, particularly the period from 1838, so that a picture can be gained of the situation that existed in the colony at the time of the arrival of the Hlubi and Ngwe in mid-1848.

Between about 1820 and 1838 the country between the Mzinyathi-Thukela and Mthamvuna rivers was largely unpopulated. The few Africans who lived there were nominally subjects of the Zulu king, though the control he exercised over some of these people was extremely limited. From 1824 a handful of English traders and hunters had been active in the area from their base at Port Natal, and in the later 1830s a number of missionaries, British and American, had arrived at Port Natal to set up mission stations in the Zulu kingdom and in Natal¹.

In late 1837 a party of Boer trekkers from the Cape arrived in the region (See Chapter I). These Boers were predominantly pastoralists whose prime objectives were to gain access to grazing land and such labour as was needed in the management of their flocks and herds.

Before their claims to land could be established, the Trekkers had to come to some accommodation with the Zulu kingdom into whose territory they were penetrating. In October 1837 one of the Trekker leaders, Retief, attempted to obtain from Dingane a treaty granting the Trekkers ownership of the land between the Thukela and Mzimvubu rivers. However Dingane had Retief's party killed in February 1838 while Retief was negotiating the treaty, and Dingane, probably in an attempt to prevent

1. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, pp.17-28.

white penetration across the Drakensberg, destroyed Boer encampments between the Bushman's and Blaauwkrantz rivers. The Trekkers then pursued a course of conflict, but their initial attempts to militarily subdue the Zulu kingdom faltered because of rivalries between two of their leaders, Potgieter and Uys. The Natal Trekkers then asked assistance from Andries Pretorius, an experienced commando leader from the Cape, who was able to unite the Trekkers in Natal and inflict a serious defeat on the Zulu army at a battle near the Ncome (Blood) River in December 1838².

After a skirmish near the Black Mfolozi, the "Zulu nation began to fall apart"³. In September 1839, Dingane's half-brother, Mpande, deserted with approximately 17 000 followers to the Boers. In January 1840 Mpande's army joined Pretorius' commando in an invasion of the Zulu kingdom, defeated Dingane's forces and drove him into exile in the north of the kingdom where he was killed by the Nyawo people. Mpande was proclaimed king of the Zulu nation and Pretorius returned to Natal with 35 000 cattle⁴. A vast tract of country between the Thukela and Black Mfolozi was ceded to the Voortrekkers.

In Natal the Trekkers were now able to establish themselves as pastoral farmers. By 1842 about 6 000 Trekkers had entered Natal and established claims to land wherever they found good pastures. The centre of this Boer community was in Pietermaritzburg, and villages were also established at Weenen and near Port Natal.

The Trekkers declared a Republic over the land between the Thukela, Mzinyathi and Mzimkhulu rivers which in 1840 was enlarged to include Boer communities over the Vaal river. A framework of government was established

2. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', pp.358-361; Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, pp.29-41.
 3. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', p.362.
 4. Ibid., p.363.

of which the key institution was the elected Volksraad, which functioned as a legislative and an executive. However this was virtually the totality of the Voortrekker administrative system. There were few officials, no police and the revenue the Volksraad was able to raise was meagre⁵.

The main problem for the Volksraad was to ensure that each boer family had sufficient labourers and yet to prevent the settlement of large numbers of Africans in the Republic who might pose a threat to the security of the Voortrekker communities and compete with them for land. Africans consequently were not allowed to live in the settled districts of the Republic except as servants, nor could they own land. The task of regulating relations between the whites and Africans in this manner was made extremely difficult by the lack of officials and also by the arrival in the Republic (particularly from 1838) of large numbers of refugees from the Zulu kingdom. In mid-1841 the Volksraad resolved to remove the "surplus" Black population of the Republic - that is, those not required as servants - into the territory south of the Mthamvuna river, close to the territory of the Mpondo⁶.

This plan invited British intervention into the affairs of the Republic. Although the response of the British authorities at the Cape was, in Thompson's terms, "confused, half-hearted and largely ineffective"⁷, the activities of the Boer groups in south-east Africa were a source of great concern to the Cape authorities. Boer raids against Ncaphayi's Bhaca in December 1840 had occasioned an appeal from the Mpondo Chief Faku for British intervention, and a detachment of troops under Captain T.C. Smith was sent to Faku's country in 1841. From the point of view of Sir George Napier, the Cape Governor, the Volksraad's decision to remove "surplus" Africans south of the Mthamvuna was likely to cause friction between the inhabitants of the eastern Cape border and those Africans from the Republic of Natalia.

5. Ibid., p.365.
6. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, pp.37-38.

7.

Napier consequently ordered Captain Smith to proceed from Faku's territory with 250 troops to occupy Port Natal in April 1842. The Volksraad resisted this move and Smith's detachment was surrounded at Port Natal and nearly starved into surrender before a relief expedition arrived. This expedition demanded that the Volksraad submit to British authority, which half of the members did in return for an amnesty⁸. Thus the ambitious plan of the Volksraad to re-settle their "surplus" African population south of the Mthamvuna was never realised and resulted only in the submission of the Volksraad to the authority of the Queen.

Napier's plan, according to one point of view, was simply to persuade the Volksraad that its policy towards Africans in Natal was disrupting the lives of Blacks in Natal and was likely, if pursued, to disturb the peace on the Cape's eastern frontier. It has been suggested that the resistance offered by the Volksraad to Captain Smith's force convinced Lord Stanley, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that Natal should be annexed to Britain⁹. In December 1842 Stanley wrote to Napier informing him of his decision.

Officially the decision to annex was taken with reluctance, for it was felt that this new colony would become an unwanted financial burden to the British Empire¹⁰. Slater, however, sees the annexation of Natal by Britain as the inevitable and "natural consequence of gradual capitalist penetration into the social formation of south-east Africa". He points to the close connections of the Port Natal hunters and traders with the Cape merchant houses, and to the fact that British traders and missionaries in south-east Africa had long been working for annexation¹². However a fuller

8. Ibid., pp.370-372; G. Mackeurtan, The Cradle Days of Natal, 1497-1845 (London, 1931), pp.262-270.
 9. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', pp.371-372, citing J.S. Galbraith, Reluctant Empire (Berkeley, 1963), p.-196.
 10. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, p.45.
 11. Slater, 'Transitions in the political economy of S-E. Africa', p.351.
 12. Ibid., pp.352-353.

discussion of this issue does not fall within the compass of this work¹³.

In May 1843 Napier announced that Natal was to be placed under the protection of the Crown but after this first formal step towards annexation there followed what might be termed an interregnum in Natal. In July 1843, Napier, on Stanley's instructions, sent a Commissioner, Henry Cloete, to Natal to investigate Trekker land claims and to treat with Mpande. Cloete firstly negotiated peace with the Volksraad, convincing its members that Holland was not coming to the aid of the Trekkers, as a group of Natal Boers had mistakenly believed.¹⁴ With the Volksraad acquiescent to the idea of British control of Natal, Cloete then turned to the important task of making terms with Mpande. Late in 1843 Cloete reached an agreement with the Zulu king whereby he was recognised as the ruler of all territory north of the Mzinyathi-Thukela. From mid-1843 to late 1845 the Volksraad continued to sit and make laws, but Captain Smith, as the British representative in Natal, had an "undefined power of veto"¹⁵. Little headway was made in the administration of the new colony, for Smith lacked instructions from the British officials, and the Volksraad lacked the basic means necessary for effective government. In 1844 Stanley, who feared that Natal would become a financial burden on Britain, decided to annex the colony directly to the Cape. However the Proclamation of annexation was only published in August 1845. Thus between mid-1843 and 1845 it was not clear in the minds of the British and Cape officials and the white settlers whether Natal would remain a colony of European settlement¹⁶.

During this transitional period large numbers of Africans from the Zulu kingdom, some of them refugees, others former inhabitants of the

13. Some of the attitudes of British officials to the annexation of Natal are discussed in Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, pp.42-46.
14. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', p.373.
15. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.48.
16. B.A. le Cordeur, 'The relations between the Cape and Natal, 1846-1879' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Natal, 1962), p.15.

territory south of the Thukela, crossed into Natal. Others also entered Natal from the area to the south occupied by Faku's Mpondo. At the same time many Trekkers, "disappointed with the rejection of their claims to land, the form of government, and the failure of the new regime to control the Africans"¹⁷ left Natal for the highveld. Thus in December 1845, when Lieutenant-Governor Martin West arrived in Natal with a handful of officials to assume control, the colony was in a state of political uncertainty and confusion.

The basic demographic features of this new colony which confronted West on his arrival were as follows:

The African population in 1845 was about 100 000 as compared with an estimated 10 000 in 1838. The Afrikaners had dwindled in number from 6 000 in 1840 to about 3 000 in 1845¹⁸. At Port Natal were a number of British traders who hoped to conduct their activities with a renewed vigour under imperial rule. At Pietermaritzburg, the next largest white settlement, was a predominantly Voortrekker community, although in 1843 a British garrison had been established in the town. The Trekkers had laid out a village at Weenen on the Blaaukrantz river and had selected a site for a town further north along the Sunday's river¹⁹.

The road between Pietermaritzburg and Port Natal was reported as being in a fairly good condition in 1843, but communications in the rest of Natal were in a poor state²⁰.

From 1835 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the Church Missionary Society had been active in south-east Africa. Both

- 17. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', p.374.
- 18. Ibid.
- 19. A.F. Hattersley, More Annals of Natal (London, 1936), p.149.
- 20. Ibid., p.117, report by Lieutenant A.C. Gibb.

groups had established contact with Dingane but following his death in 1842 the Americans had withdrawn from the Zulu kingdom. The Anglicans ceased missionary activity altogether in south-east Africa but the Americans established two stations along the Natal coast where they encouraged converts to settle on their lands and become peasant producers. From 1842 the Wesleyan Missionary Society began to establish itself at Port Natal and Pietermaritzburg²¹.

West had at his disposal only the most basic means to structure an administration to control the lives of the inhabitants of Natal. There was a five-man Executive Council appointed by the Cape Governor to assist him in the formulation and regulation of laws for the administration of the colony. The instructions issued to West by Napier's successor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, empowered him to draw up ordinances, "as you shall deem necessary for the peace, order and good government of your district"²². However as Natal had not been granted the status of a separate colony, the Cape Legislature had to ratify all the ordinances formulated by the Natal Executive Council.

The Executive Council had only a small number of personnel to entrust with the task of ensuring that its ordinances were carried into effect. In 1850, the first year for which figures are available, there were only 62 paid civil servants in Natal and the number was undoubtedly far smaller in 1845²³. The only means of raising revenue directly was

- 21. N.A. Etherington, 'The rise of the Kholwa in south-east Africa: African Christian communities in Natal, Pondoland and Zululand, 1835-1880', (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Yale, 1971), pp.80-83; J. du Plessis, A History of Christian Missions in South Africa (London, 1911), p.260.
- 22. GH 866, 1845/2, Maitland to West, 22 November 1845.
- 23. Cited in J.B. Wright, Bushman Raiders of the Drakensberg 1840-1870 (Pietermaritzburg, 1971), p.48, from Natal Blue Book, 1850.

through customs dues and the sale of Crown lands, and West had been instructed to try and make the administration pay its own way as far as possible. The appointment of officials was therefore an additional burden to the exchequer. At its disposal the administration had only about 500 troops. Stationed at Durban and Pietermaritzburg these military garrisons could only effectively protect these two towns. Only in 1848 when Sir Harry Smith, Governor of the Cape since December of the previous year, authorised the recruitment of 100 fully armed Native Police under white officers, could limited protection be given to inhabitants in the outlying districts of Natal²⁴.

A legal system for Natal was framed by Henry Cloete, the Commissioner sent by Napier to Natal in 1843. In 1845 Cloete was appointed Recorder and "fortified by an Ordinance [Number 2 of 1845] established Roman-Dutch Law as the Common law of Natal"²⁵. Cloete from 1845 attempted to apply its principles in the administration of justice to Africans in Natal.

It is pertinent at this point to consider the problems of administration presented to the Executive Council. The most urgent tasks were those which had confounded the Voortrekkers. The African population had to be settled and the land claims of the Trekkers had to be fully established. The Executive Council also had to ensure that peace prevailed within Natal. Afrikaners and Africans in Natal were disturbed by waves of immigrants from across the Mzinyathi-Thukela in the mid-1840s and by the attempts of Mpande to force these people to return to the Zulu kingdom. Africans and whites in the northern districts of Natal believed that Mpande planned an invasion of the colony, and the administration was compelled to act on these reports in order to keep the inhabitants of Natal calm, and to prevent the continued exodus of discontented Boers from the colony. Natal's peace was also threatened

24. Wright, *Bushman Raiders*, p.77.
 25. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.55.

26. ...
 27. ...
 28. ...
 29. ...

by the possibility of an alliance between Mpande and groups of disaffected Natal Boers²⁶. Towards the Drakensberg, groups of Bushmen also disturbed the peace of the district by raiding livestock from the inhabitants of Natal's western border.

The urgency of these issues required that the administration take immediate steps to deal with them. The Executive Council resolved to divide the land in Natal between whites and Blacks; whites to own land on a system of individual tenure and Africans to have access to land in specific locations. Under the circumstances it was the only course open to the administration. The Volksraad had granted large tracts of land often without delivery of title deeds, so that Trekker land claims were in a state of confusion. The establishment of areas reserved solely for African occupation had a precedent in the Cape where West had observed, at first hand, the formation of the Kat River Settlement in the Albany district²⁷. Cloete, on his return from Natal to the Cape in 1844, had recommended a similar scheme²⁸.

In March 1846 West appointed a Locations Commission to give effect to this plan. On this Commission were Theophilus Shepstone, the 'Diplomatic Agent to the Native Tribes', W. Stanger, the Surveyor-General, Lieutenant C. Gibb, an engineer officer and two American missionaries, Newton Adams and Daniel Lindley. Shepstone was the driving force on this commission. He had served in the Cape Colonial Service since 1835 and had acquired a reputation of being a good linguist and as having a thorough understanding of Nguni society²⁹. Although only twenty nine years old at this time, Shepstone's self-assurance and administrative skills had gained him the support of his superiors in the Cape.

The Commission reported periodically to the Lieutenant-Governor, who acted on its recommendations. In November 1846 it suggested the

26. P.H. Lapping, 'The influence Panda had on the early settlement of Natal', (unpublished B.A.Hons. thesis, University of Natal, 1963), pp.2-5.
27. Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', pp.11-12.
28. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, p.58.
29. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', p.376.

demarcation of a location just outside Pietermaritzburg (the "Zwart Kops" location) and in March 1847 three more locations, at Umlazi, Umvoti and Inanda, were gazetted by West for African habitation³⁰. The Umlazi and Umvoti locations were situated around the mission stations of two American missionaries, Aldin Grout and Adams. Some of the land in these locations was of good quality, though much of the choicest farming land in Natal had been occupied by the Trekkers, or, from 1846, was in the process of being bought up by white speculators³¹. It was Shepstone's task to move the African population into the locations, a task which he accomplished with little expenditure and relatively little opposition from African groups in Natal. However, some historians have tended to overstate his achievements in this regard³², and the fact that many Africans were already living in the areas demarcated as locations has often been overlooked by students of the Shepstonian era in Natal.

In December 1846, two additional members were appointed to the Locations Commission and its duties were extended to include proposals for the establishment of magisterial districts in Natal and the appointment of magistrates for the locations as they were created. The first magistrate was appointed in the Klip River district of Natal in October 1847³³.

In the same month that the Locations Commission started its sitting (March 1846) West announced that a survey of white-owned farms would commence. Although Stanger, the Surveyor-General, had arrived in Natal nine months before West, a shortage of staff and Stanger's insistence on proceeding first to a survey of erven in the towns in Natal, had caused a delay in the important task of establishing claims to farms.

30. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.60.
 31. H. Slater, 'Land, labour and capital in Natal: the Natal Land and Colonisation company 1860-1948', *Journal of African History*, vol. XVI, no. 2 (1975), p.259.
 32. Etherington, particularly, has drawn attention to this point. See Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', pp.15-16.
 33. *Records of Natal Executive Council*, EC 2, pp.42-51, meeting 18, 20 October 1847.

Moreover the survey of farms was conducted with deliberation and by the end of 1846 only 104 land claims had received enquiry (of which 41 were upheld) and 109 were still being investigated. By 1847 four-fifths of the claimants to land had left Natal and six-sevenths of the white-owned land in the colony was unoccupied³⁴.

Once moves were being made towards the allocation of land in Natal to whites and Blacks the administration turned its attention to the equally important task of maintaining peace within the colony. West initially attempted, in February 1846, to increase the defensive forces of Natal. He asked for re-inforcements from the Cape, and encouraged the Klip river Boers to remain in the colony, because he believed that they were better equipped than the British forces to withstand a Zulu attack³⁵. Maitland was unwilling to provide more troops however, and the emigration of the Klip River Boers reduced Natal's defensive capacity along the Mzinyathi. West then turned to diplomacy. He sent several messages to Mpande, assuring him that for its part the Natal government intended to remain on friendly terms with the Zulu state, provided Mpande did not disturb the peace of British subjects in Natal³⁶.

Paradoxically, it was a group of Klip river Boers, the very people whom West sought to rely on to resist a Zulu attack, who exposed the weakness of the administration. In mid-1847 a group of Boers remaining in northern Natal, frightened by yet another rumour of an impending attack on Natal by Mpande, and disillusioned by the delay in recognising their land claims, began negotiating with Mpande with a view to forming a separate republic under Mpande's protection in the area between the Thukela, the Mzinyathi, and the Drakensberg³⁷. West sent messages to Mpande reminding him of the treaty made with Cloete in 1843. Mpande agreed to abide by the boundary mapped by Cloete, and repudiated the agreement he had made with the Klip river Boers³⁸. In late 1847 the Executive Council decided to send

34. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.61; Le Cordeur, 'Relations between Natal and the Cape', p.19.
35. Lapping, 'The influence Panda had on Natal', pp.19-20.
36. See, for example, EC I, pp.81-86, message from West to Mpande, 6 August 1846.
37. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.63.
38. Le Cordeur, 'Relations between Natal and the Cape', p.21.

a small garrison to the Klip river district and to pardon any "insurgents" who were prepared to take an oath of allegiance to the Crown³⁹.

The administration was also obliged to take action, during the first years of its existence, against Bushmen who raided livestock across Natal's western border. Essentially the problem required the intervention of a cavalry force or the establishment of police posts, neither of which were within the financial or military means of the Government. In the latter half of 1846 the establishment of a small military post at Elandskop and the success of a commando formed to retrieve stolen cattle, helped to assure the inhabitants near the Drakensberg that the administration was concerned to combat Bushman incursions⁴⁰.

The administration was also bound to intervene in disputes between African groups within the colony. In January 1847 Shepstone received information that Chief Fodo of the Nhangwini people was threatening to attack his neighbours. An African levy was sent against Fodo and although he managed to escape to the south his people were dispossessed of 500 cattle and Fodo was replaced with a chief well-disposed towards the Government⁴¹. This event is significant in several ways. It can be seen as a precedent for the way in which the administration dealt with what it regarded as recalcitrant chiefs. It also showed quite clearly 'what qualities were expected of chiefs who were absorbed into the bureaucratic system'⁴². They were expected to refer any disputes between them and other African groups to the Government and to abide by the decisions of the Supreme Chief in this regard. Lastly, by investing in the Diplomatic Agent the power to call out African levies from chiefs in Natal, the administration was able to augment the limited military forces which it had at its disposal.

39. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.63.
40. Wright, *Bushman Raiders*, p.58.
41. D. Welsh, *The Roots of Segregation: Native Policy in Colonial Natal, 1845-1910* (Cape Town, 1971), pp.19-20.
42. *Ibid.*, p.20.

By the beginning of 1848 the administration was starting to make some headway with the difficult problems with which it was faced. The locations were slowly coming into being, an administrative structure was being created, a legal system was being uniformly applied, Mpande showed signs that he would maintain peaceful relations with Natal, and steps were being taken to repel Bushman raids.

However, the efforts of Natal's officials were diverted by the arrival of Sir Harry Smith in the colony in 1848. After the annexation of Natal, Pretorius, the Trekker leader who had headed the commando against Dingane, had accepted British suzerainty in Natal. However, by 1847, disillusioned with the failure of the British authorities in Natal to effectively transfer any political power to the Voortrekkers, he attempted to lay his grievances before Sir Henry Pottinger, the Cape Governor. Pottinger refused to see Pretorius, who immediately returned to Natal and made preparations to lead most of the remaining Trekkers out of the colony. In February 1848 the newly-appointed Sir Harry Smith arrived in Natal to redress Trekker grievances and prevent their leaving for the highveld⁴³.

In order to deal quickly with the Afrikaners' land claims, Smith established a Land Commission and appointed members to it who would take a more sympathetic view to Trekkers' land claims. West, bowing to the wishes of his superior and certain that the proposals of the Land Commission would conflict with those of the Locations Commission, suspended the sittings of the latter. Two months later, in April 1848, the new Commission recommended the establishment of only six locations of reduced size, compared to the Locations Commission's ten proposed locations, and decided many land claims in favour of the Afrikaners⁴⁴.

In August 1848 the Royal instructions were received in Natal sanctioning the policy of "Indirect Rule" and the application of customary

43. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', p.377; Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, pp.62-63.
44. Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', pp.32-33.

law to the African people of the colony. The acknowledgement of customary law sparked off a dispute, in the second half of 1848, between Cloete and Shepstone. Cloete argued that Natal, being a dependency of the Cape, should adopt Roman-Dutch law as the basis of its legal system, as the Cape had done. Shepstone, on the other hand, wished to rely on the powers vested in the chiefs by Customary law to assist in the administration of Africans in Natal⁴⁵.

Thus, from about mid-1848, the policies envisaged by the officials of the Executive Council for the administration of Natal, although approved by the Home Government, were being undermined in Natal by Cloete and Sir Harry Smith.

It was at this point in time, when the colony's rulers were in a state of uncertainty over policy for Natal, that the Hlubi and Ngwe entered the Klip river district of Natal. After crossing into Natal about the end of July 1848 the Hlubi and Ngwe settled near the Mnambithi (Klip) river on land to which the northern Natal Trekkers were attempting to stake ownership. Probably because Sir Harry Smith was attempting to conciliate these Boers at this period, West instructed Shepstone to travel to the Klip river district to move the Hlubi and Ngwe, as well as two groups of Africans under Hadahada and Daman, out of the area and to resettle them elsewhere in Natal. On his arrival at the Mnambithi Shepstone ordered these chiefdoms to move closer to the Mkhomazi river, in the south of the colony⁴⁶. Why Shepstone decided to remove the Hlubi and Ngwe to the Mkhomazi is not clear from his correspondence with West, but it may have been related to the need to prevent Bushmen raids into this area of Natal which had been more frequent than normal in the first few months of 1848⁴⁷. Possibly Shepstone planned at this stage to place a barrier of Africans between the white farmers of Natal and the Bushmen. Whether Shepstone intended the move as a long-term plan or simply as a temporary measure to avoid friction between

45. Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, pp.14-15.
 46. CSO 44(2), no. 60, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 7 August 1848.
 47. Wright, *Bushman Raiders*, pp.88-90.

the Black refugees and Klip river farmers is not clear from the evidence. Whatever the intention, the Hlubi and Ngwe refused to move. According to Mabhonsa, Stuart's informant, they "were unacquainted with the country in question" and were reluctant to leave⁴⁸. In October 1848 West instructed Shepstone to enforce the removal of the Klip river refugees⁴⁹, but no action was taken.

It seems probable that the activities of Sir Harry Smith in Natal created confusion in regard to official policy towards Africans, thus preventing Shepstone from acting decisively in connection with the Hlubi and Ngwe. In addition the Hlubi and Ngwe had only just planted their crops and Shepstone may have been prepared to let them harvest this first crop so that they would have food with them when they moved to their new homes. A final factor possibly preventing Shepstone from taking effective action was that Bushman raids into Natal in late 1848 and January 1849 left the Government without a force to carry out the proposed removals should the authorities meet with resistance⁵⁰. The Hlubi and Ngwe were thus able to plant their crops on the land where they settled and were left undisturbed for seven or eight months.

Only in March or April 1849 did the Government take up again the issue of the Klip river refugees. By this stage the administration had a clearer picture of where to settle the Hlubi and Ngwe. Shepstone toured the Bushman's river district in early April and sent for Phuthini and Langalibalele, as well as the other Klip river chiefs. These men and their adherents were ordered by Shepstone to move onto locations along the Bushman's river near the Drakensberg. They were to inhabit these "buffer locations" in order to guard the white farmers living between Estcourt⁵¹ and Fort Nottingham. After issuing these instructions Shepstone spent a

48. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.50.
 49. SNA 1/1/1, no. 8, West to Shepstone, 25 October 1848.
 50. Wright, Bushman Raiders, p.93.
 51. The village of Estcourt was founded in 1847 when West had stationed a detachment of troops at a point on the Bushman's river in an attempt to curb Bushman depredations. In 1849 it was described as a larger village than Ladysmith. See Hattersely, More Annals of Natal, p.152,157.

week in the upper reaches of the Bushman's river looking for a suitable site for the establishment of a Police post, before returning to the village of Ladysmith⁵² (known at this time as Klip river).

He discovered there that the Hlubi and Ngwe were making no attempt to move. They claimed to know the proposed area of their location and complained that there would be "no materials to make huts for their families"⁵³. Some individual followers of the two chiefs found the idea of moving so intolerable that they opted to return to the Zulu kingdom⁵⁴. According to evidence later compiled by Bishop Colenso, Langalibalele was unwilling to move firstly because his mother was ill and secondly because his followers had not yet reaped a second crop⁵⁵. A greater yield of mealies is obtained after the second year of cultivation and it would have been safer to move after a second and larger crop had been harvested. It is difficult to assess how real were these reasons for not moving. It seems likely that they were excuses offered in the hope that the authorities might give up the attempt to move the two chiefdoms.

The area where Shepstone intended to locate the Hlubi and Ngwe was, on his own admission, not particularly well-suited for habitation, and after returning from his visit to Bushman's river in early May he altered the proposed boundaries of the location in order to permit the Hlubi and Ngwe to establish themselves further away from the base of the Drakensberg⁵⁶. Shepstone appointed a local farmer from Bushman's river,

52. CSO 20(I), no. 8, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 30 April 1849.
53. SNA 1/8/1, pp.159-160, Shepstone to West, 20 May 1849.
54. Ibid.
55. BPP C-1141, Langalibalele and the Amahlubi Tribe: being Remarks upon the official record of the Trials of the Chief and other members of the Amahlubi Tribe, p.5.
56. SNA 1/8/1, pp.159-166, Shepstone to West, 20 May 1849.

57. CSO 20, no. 31, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 15 July 1849.
58. SNA 1/1/1, no. 101, Shepstone to West, 15 July 1849.
59. CSO 20, no. 21(1), Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 15 July 1849.
60. Notes on the History of the Amahlubi Tribe, p. 18.
61. SNA 1/1/1, no. 101, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 15 July 1849.

The first step was to find a suitable site for the establishment of a Police post, before returning to the village of Ladysmith (known at this time as Klip river). He discovered there that the Hlubi and Ngwe were making no attempt to move. They claimed to know the proposed area of their location and complained that there would be "no materials to make huts for their families". Some individual followers of the two chiefs found the idea of moving so intolerable that they opted to return to the Zulu kingdom. According to evidence later compiled by Bishop Colenso, Langalibalele was unwilling to move firstly because his mother was ill and secondly because his followers had not yet reaped a second crop. A greater yield of mealies is obtained after the second year of cultivation and it would have been safer to move after a second and larger crop had been harvested. It is difficult to assess how real were these reasons for not moving. It seems likely that they were excuses offered in the hope that the authorities might give up the attempt to move the two chiefdoms. The area where Shepstone intended to locate the Hlubi and Ngwe was, on his own admission, not particularly well-suited for habitation, and after returning from his visit to Bushman's river in early May he altered the proposed boundaries of the location in order to permit the Hlubi and Ngwe to establish themselves further away from the base of the Drakensberg. Shepstone appointed a local farmer from Bushman's river,

M.J. Oosthuysen, to act on his behalf and to superintend the resettlement of the Hlubi and Ngwe⁵⁷.

However Oosthuysen, acting on his own initiative, decided against enforcing the removal because it was mid-winter and the grass had been burnt in the proposed locations⁵⁸. As the Hlubi leaders had initially pointed out, this would not allow for grazing or hut-building. Oosthuysen also decided to allow the Hlubi and Ngwe to live even further away from the base of the mountains, as he felt that neither people nor their cattle could live at the altitude of the area originally designated⁵⁹. Oosthuysen was familiar with the district and was well-qualified to make such a judgment. Although this third demarcation of their future location offered the Hlubi and Ngwe a far better site for habitation than the area originally conceived of by Shepstone, they showed little inclination to move.

However, by the end of August an important constitutional development gave Shepstone the confidence to act against the Klip river chiefs. On 23 June the Executive Council enacted Ordinance 3 of 1849, which gave recognition to the Royal Instructions of March 1848. By taking this step the Council enshrined the system of customary law which was sanctioned in the Royal Instructions⁶⁰. Shepstone thus had a firmer legal base upon which to operate in regard to African administration in Natal. This in turn removed the constraints upon Shepstone's freedom to act again on the issue of "refugees" in Natal. In August 1849 an incident occurred which determined Shepstone to move quickly against the Klip river chiefs. In the middle of August one of the Native Police allotted to assist Oosthuysen had been roughly treated by some of Madahada's people. This caused Oosthuysen to report his belief that a "combination" existed among the Klip river chiefdoms to resist Government authority⁶¹.

57. CSO 20, no. 31, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 19 July 1849.
58. SNA 1/1/12, no. 100, Oosthuysen to Shepstone, 19 July 1849.
59. CSO 20, no. 31(a), Oosthuysen to Shepstone, 19 July 1849.
60. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.18.
61. SNA 1/1/2, no. 103, Oosthuysen to Shepstone, 26 August 1849.

Oosthuysen saw further proof of this in the fact that the Hlubi, instead of preparing to move, were planting and erecting new huts⁶².

Shepstone interpreted these incidents as a test of his "authority and influence over the district"⁶³. The Executive Council resolved that Shepstone should now enforce the removal of the Klip river chiefs and their adherents. Consequently Shepstone set off, in late September, with his brother John Shepstone, Captain Howell, Sargeant-Major Doyle and 89 men of the Natal Native Corps to, as Shepstone expressed it, "break up this coalition". To assist him Shepstone summoned the assistance of 800 men of Jobe's Sithole, 600 of Nodada's Thembu, 300 of Phakade's Chunu and an unspecified number of Zikhali's Ngwane⁶⁴. They all obeyed Shepstone's summons, presumably because they feared punishment if they did not respond and because they rightly saw in it the prospect of reward. This large force traversed the Klip river area, forcibly expelling the occupants of all African homesteads. Many of the Hlubi and Ngwe had left once they had heard of the arrival of the force in the district or had made provision for the concealment of their cattle. Some sent their cattle towards the Drakensberg while the Hlubi had resorted to the expedient of hiding their cattle among the herds of white farmers⁶⁵. Phuthini, whom Shepstone reported as being the most "obstinate" of all the chiefs, secreted an estimated 3000 cattle in the Drakensberg and occupied and fortified a mountain near the Klip river village⁶⁵. The Government levy had to force the Ngwe out of this stronghold, a task that was laborious but involved little fighting. Two hundred Ngwe were officially taken prisoner and Shepstone ordered the confiscation of a number of Ngwe cattle, a fate which they accepted without demur, according to John Bird, the magistrate at Klip river⁶⁷.

62. Ibid.
63. SNA 1/8/1, p.74, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 14 October 1849.
64. Ibid.
65. CSO 20, no. 40, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 14 October 1849.
66. SNA 1/8/1, p.74, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 14 October 1849.
67. J. Bird, 'Natal 1846-1851', Natalia, vol. I, no. 1 (1971), pp.17-18.

The Ngwe were given time to recover the cattle they had hidden previously in the mountains before moving to their new location. The prisoners were later all released except Phuthini's son and an elder of the Ngwe, both of whom were held hostage by Shepstone as a guarantee of obedience from the Ngwe. By this technically illegal action Shepstone was able to ensure compliance on the part of the chiefdom. The Secretary for Native Affairs formed such an adverse opinion of Phuthini, who had "so grossly deceived" him, that he felt he could not "place the slightest reliance on his bare word"⁶⁸. One thousand head of cattle in all were confiscated from the Klip river chiefdoms and redistributed among the Africans who had assisted the police. It is not clear how many head were taken from the Hlubi and Ngwe specifically, but 150 head were returned to the Hlubi on condition that they protected the white farmers in the Bushman's river vicinity from Bushman incursions⁶⁹.

Shepstone was pleased that the Hlubi and Ngwe had finally obeyed his orders and that steps had been taken to solve the enduring problem of Bushman raids into Natal. He was also personally pleased at the support he had received from the Klip river Trekker farmers, whose interests he now saw as being identical to the Government's⁷⁰. The *Natal Witness* also remarked approvingly upon the degree of co-operation exhibited by the Klip river farmers in the Klip River removals⁷¹.

Shepstone instructed Captain Howell to remain in the Bushman's river vicinity to point out to Phuthini, Langalibalele and Hadahada the approximate delimitations of their locations. This he did on 1 December by assembling them on a prominent hill and drawing a map on a large stone. Howell informed them that they would not be moved again, for which they expressed their gratitude⁷².

68. CSO 20, no. 40, Shepstone to Secretary to Government, 14 October 1849.
 69. Ibid.
 70. Ibid.
 71. *Natal Witness*, 19 October 1849.
 72. Proceedings of a Commission...to Inquire into the Past and Present State of Kafirs in the District of Natal... 1852-1853 (Pietermaritzburg, 1853), evidence of J. Howell, Part III, p.14.

[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

73. Ibid.
 74. Ibid.
 75. Ibid.
 76. Ibid.
 77. Ibid.
 78. Ibid.
 79. Ibid.
 80. Ibid.
 81. Ibid.
 82. Ibid.
 83. Ibid.
 84. Ibid.
 85. Ibid.
 86. Ibid.
 87. Ibid.
 88. Ibid.
 89. Ibid.
 90. Ibid.
 91. Ibid.
 92. Ibid.
 93. Ibid.
 94. Ibid.
 95. Ibid.
 96. Ibid.
 97. Ibid.
 98. Ibid.
 99. Ibid.
 100. Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE

ACCOMMODATION TO THE NEW ORDER (1850 - 1855)

The Hlubi location was situated on the upper Bloukrans and Little Bushman's rivers. The Ngve location was sited in the valley of the Little Thukela (or Njesuthi), in a tract of country established later as being seven miles wide and fifteen long¹ (See Map 3). Whether this was the size of the location in the 1840s is unknown. The people would have tended presumably to live in the lower valley regions where cultivation would have been easier than in the upper reaches of the locations. The highland regions were open for habitation though the terrain was steeper and harder to cultivate.

It seems that fairly soon after arriving in this district, Langalibalele established two *imizi* or homesteads, Bhekuzulu and Emphangweni, in a valley area some seventeen miles west of the present-day town of Estcourt. This valley was on the fringe of a mixed grassveld area offering grasses that were palatable to livestock all the year round. (See Map 2). Later evidence reveals that *imizi* were also established by Langalibalele in the higher areas, though it is difficult to place the dates of their formation. Those whose names are known were Nobamba (the nearest to Emphangweni), Mpihlweni (higher up the Bushman's river than Nobamba), Mizi (under Ntabanhlope or Table Mountain) and Amahendini (in the high country close to Nobamba). The presence of these *imizi* in the higher areas suggests that the Hlubi practised a form of transhumance. Modern practice is to move cattle to the higher areas of the Drakensberg foothills

1. NBB, vol. III, Report of a Committee Appointed by his Excellency in Council to Consider the Best Method of Employing the Putili Fund, 1877, p.2.
2. Anon., Kafir Revolt in Natal, evidence of Mhaba, p.57, Malambule; p.47, Vango; p.68; Sito'wana, p.43.

to eat the first spring grasses and to return them to the lower-lying areas in December or January. Evidence that this was the Hlubi practice comes from a Hlubi man in the service of the Government in 1874. He explained that the virtual desertion of Hlubi homesteads in the "low country" in the early spring was because "the cattle went to the Berg about the middle of August to eat the first spring grass under the mountains"³. Similarly cattle were driven from Emphanweni to Miza to obtain better grass near Ntabamhlope⁴.

Thus it seems that the Hlubi took advantage of the different bioclimatic regions contained within their locations. The sweet grass of the lower thornveld area, to which some of the Hlubi would have had access, offered good quality grazing but it was not plentiful; the sourveld offered grass of generally poorer quality (except in early summer when it afforded the best grazing available), but in great quantity⁵. By moving their cattle on a seasonal basis the Hlubi and Ngwe could support larger herds than cattle owners who were unable to utilise their environment in such a manner.

Crop cultivation would have been feasible in the flat Njesuthi valley where most of the Ngwe were located. Cultivation similarly could have been extensive in the lower regions of the Hlubi location, particularly around Langelibalele's *imizi* at Bhekuzulu and Emphanweni. The soils and vegetation were similar to those of the Mzinyathi-Ncome area which they had previously inhabited, but rainfall in the new locations was higher which would have allowed for a more consistent cultivation of crops.

3. Ibid., evidence of Nomyaca, p.55.
 4. Ibid., evidence of Mhaha, p.58.
 5. Department of Agricultural and Technical Services, Development Program for the Natal Region, 1972 (Cedara, Natal, 1973).
 I am thankful to Mr. D.I. Bransby for information on bioclimatic conditions of the Estcourt-Loskop-Ntabamhlope districts of Natal.

According to Watt's map of Natal, published in 1855⁶, the land below the Hlubi and Ngwe locations (closer to the valley thornveld region) was virtually all owned by white farmers who had purchased the best grazing regions in the northern and midland areas of Natal. These farms were mainly owned by Trekkers though how many of them were occupied by the owners in 1849 is impossible to ascertain. Initially there does not seem to have been conflict over land between the Hlubi in the location and such white farmers as lived in the area. John MacFarlane, appointed to the magistracy of Weenen in 1855, reported in the following year that white farmers were grazing their cattle in the Drakensberg locations along with the Africans' herds⁷.

Contemporary assessments of the locations indicate that they were fertile and suited to cattle-keeping. Bishop Colenso, who visited the Hlubi location in February 1855, described it in these terms:

The location included some of the finest arable land in the colony, and the lowlands are described as very fertile; the grazing land was also very superior, and the cattle thrived remarkably well⁸.

Shepstone's view concurs with Colenso's. He thought the Hlubi location "afforded good pasturage" and in the lower areas was "capable of supporting a large population"⁹. Shepstone's opinion was based on first-hand information derived during several visits to the Hlubi location.

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- 6. Map of the Colony of Natal, drawn by J.A. Watts, 1855. (Natal Archives).
 - 7. SNA 1/3/5, no. 46, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 10 March 1856.
 - 8. BPP C-1141, Langalibalele and the Amahlubi Tribe, p.61.
 - 9. SNA 1/6/8, 'Papers relating to Langalibalele', no. 21, Memo by T. Shepstone, 9 April 1875.
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However Howell and Struben, who were familiar with the Hlubi location, both thought that it was too small in extent for the number of people who had to live within it, although they agreed that some areas of the location were extremely fertile¹⁰. Howell's estimation in 1849 that the location was too small was probably correct. Yet the evidence suggests that from early on some of the Hlubi lived outside the area originally allocated to them. Owing to the lack of a proper survey of the locations it does seem likely that neither the Hlubi or Ngwe nor the officials were familiar with the exact boundaries of the location. Moreover the administration did not have the personnel to ensure that the Hlubi and Ngwe remained within the limits of their locations. Thus by 1864 the Hlubi had extended their living area from 90 000 acres, the approximate size envisaged for their location by Stanger in 1850, to 145 000 acres¹¹. This dispersion may have been caused by individuals voluntarily moving out of the location (a theme for later discussion), or because the location was too small or because its exact boundaries were unknown to anyone for the first fifteen years of its existence. In 1853 Shepstone directed that beacons be laid out to define the Hlubi and Ngwe locations¹² (see below) but his orders were apparently not carried out. Whether attempts were made by the administration after 1864 to define the boundaries of the locations is not clear from available evidence. Thus for one or several of these reasons, some of the Hlubi, for at least the first fifteen years of their existence in Natal, moved onto Crown lands or onto unoccupied farms near the locations.

The inexact delineation of their location was one factor which made it difficult for the Hlubi to establish themselves in their new home.

10. Proceedings of Native Commission of 1852-1853, part I, p.14.
 11. GH 1538, no. 79, Scott to Newcastle, 29 October 1864, footnote by Shepstone.
 12. SNA 1/3/2, no. 109, Memo. by Shepstone on Blaine to Shepstone, 7 October 1853.

In addition to this, Langalibalele claimed that his people had lost 4000 head of cattle during the removal from the Newcastle district, though the magistrate for Weenen county estimated later that this figure was nearer 2500 head¹³. These losses would have reduced the opportunities for the Hlubi to re-establish themselves in their former economic activities.

The land issue also gave rise to discord between some of the Hlubi and Ngwe and their white neighbours, making it even more difficult for them to adapt to their new home. While there does not seem to have been antagonism between the Hlubi and Ngwe living in the location and neighbouring white farmers there was friction between individuals of the chiefdoms settled on occupied land and the owners of these farms. During the 1850s there was a slow but discernible shift of attitude among white land owners in regard to farming. The attempts to portray Natal as a farming country to white immigrants had met with initial success. Between 1849 and 1852 nearly 5000 immigrants had entered Natal¹⁴. However, many of them failed to become successful farmers, because they lacked the expertise, the capital or the labour. Africans had successfully resisted attempts made by the colonists to press them into working for white farmers. Consequently few of the white immigrants sought to add to the initial small acreage allowed to them when entering the colony, and large areas of land lay in the hands of speculators who had bought land in hopes of selling it back to prospective farmers at inflated prices. Both speculators, unable to sell their land, and some aspirant farmers, unable to obtain the labour necessary for profitable farming, turned to extracting rent from Africans living on their land. They realised "in the face of African resistance to white labour demands" that "the key to wealth lay in exploiting Natal's existing rural economy based on African producers, rather than in awaiting a transformation of the colonial sector which showed little sign of coming about through the free play of market forces"¹⁵.

13. BPP C-1141, p.3; SMA 1/3/4, no. 37, Blaine to Shepstone, 18 March 1855.
14. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.65.
15. Slater, 'Land, Labour and Capital in Natal', p.263.

... however, both thought that it was the Hlubi who had to be removed from the Newcastle district... of the location were estimated later that this figure was nearer 2500 head... These losses would have reduced the opportunities for the Hlubi to re-establish themselves in their former economic activities.

10. Proceedings of the Executive Council of Natal, 1852-1853, part I, p.141.
11. SMA 1/3/4, no. 37, Blaine to Shepstone, 18 March 1855.
12. SMA 1/3/4, no. 37, Blaine to Shepstone, 18 March 1855.

Although there was a general shift away from commercial farming to "rent farming", some whites still hoped that they could obtain African labour and make a profitable living out of agriculture. Speculators were seen by these men as tying up labour that they wanted and in time there built up a certain amount of animosity between them and "land-jobbers" or speculators.

Members of the Hlubi and Ngwe who settled on the lands of practising farmers or speculators were consequently faced with demands for rent from speculators or landlords, or for their labour from commercially active farmers. In 1853 the magistrate based in Weenen¹⁶, Dr. Benjamin Blaine, reported on the "constant complaints" to him arising out of the "land-issue":

Claims are made on the Natives by the legal owners of the land, the justice of which (as they were located on these lands by the Government) they are unable to perceive and naturally disposed to resist¹⁷.

These "claims" made by the whites were apparently for rent or labour. Shepstone foresaw that "considerable difficulty is likely to arise with the tribes of Langalibalele and Putile" and forwarded Blaine's letter to the Surveyor-General asking if he would clarify boundaries around the locations¹⁸. However no immediate steps were taken to re-survey the area and it was only later (1864) that the size of the Hlubi location was established.

Official records after the late 1850s contain no further reference to complaints by whites about Africans on their land in the Weenen district. It is therefore difficult to assess for how long the dispute between white farmers and the Hlubi over the "land issue" continued. Later evidence reveals that many white farmers in the Weenen area continued in their

16. The Weenen magistracy was created in 1852. In 1859 the Magistracy moved to Estcourt, which had become the larger town.
17. SNA 1/3/2, no. 109, Blaine to Shepstone, 7 October 1853.
18. SNA 1/3/2, no. 109, Memo. by Shepstone on Blaine to Shepstone, 7 October 1853.

In addition to this, Langalibalele's claims that his people had lost 5000 head of cattle during the removal from the Langalibalele district, though the magistracy for Weenen county estimated later that this figure was nearer 1500 head¹³. These losses would have reduced the opportunities for the Hlubi to re-establish themselves in their former economic activities.

The land issue also gave rise to distrust between some of the Hlubi and Ngwe and their white neighbours, making it more difficult for them to adapt to their new home. While there does not seem to have been antagonism between the Hlubi and Ngwe living in the location and neighbouring white farmers there was friction between individuals of the two groups settled on adjacent land and the owners of these farms. During the 1850s there was a slow but discernible shift of white away from land issues in regard to farming. The statements reported here as a result of the country to white immigrants had varied widely. However, many of them failed to become successful farmers, because they lacked the expertise, the capital or the labour. Africans had successfully resisted attempts made by the colonists to give them land working for white farmers. Consequently few of the white immigrants sought to act as the labour supply. Average allowed to them when working the colony, and large areas of land lay in the hands of speculators who had bought land in papers of selling it back to prospective farmers at inflated prices. Both speculators, unable to sell their land, and some resistant farmers, unable to obtain the labour necessary for profitable farming, turned to extracting rent from Africans living on their land. They realised "in the face of African resistance to white labour demands" that "the key to wealth lay in exploiting the white labour economy based on African producers, rather than in waiting a re-orientation of the colonial sector which would have sign of coming about through the free play of market forces"¹⁴.

13. SNA 1/3/2, no. 109, Blaine to Shepstone, 7 October 1853.
14. SNA 1/3/2, no. 109, Blaine to Shepstone, 7 October 1853.
15. SNA 1/3/2, no. 109, Blaine to Shepstone, 7 October 1853.

efforts to obtain African labour after the mid-1850s, though for nearly fifteen years the demand did not appear to reach the intensity of the early 1850s.

The question of rights to land must have been a cause of concern to the Hlubi and Ngwe, particularly those finding themselves living on private lands and subject to rent and labour obligations. The Hlubi and Ngwe before 1848 assumed a common right to land use. A system of private ownership would have been seen, by the majority of them who were not private owners of land, as a threat against access to a vital resource. Thus any system or individual which restricted access to land was bound to be opposed. With the passing of time Africans in Natal realised that the only way to avoid being forced to participate as wage-labourers with whites was to retain access to land. Only in this way could a surplus of agricultural produce or cattle be created and sold to raise cash to meet the requirements of the state in the form of taxes and rents¹⁹. At this time however all members of the Hlubi and Ngwe were concerned not so much to create a surplus, as to solve the problem of land usage caused by the system of private ownership.

An indication of what could happen because of this confusion arose in late 1853 in an incident involving Chief Hadahada. Hadahada had been moved into an area just north of the Ngwe location onto farms belonging to two white men, Zoederburg and Schoeman. Hadahada and his people were allowed to remain on this land until Schoeman, who had never in fact occupied his farm, sold it to a P. Raath who attempted to take up residence early in 1853²⁰. In late September Hadahada was ordered off the farm although the clerk of the magistrate's office in Ladysmith claimed that Raath never produced "any legal right to the farm"²¹. A force, consisting of a troop of light horse led by Dr. Blaine and Struben, the

19. H. Slater, 'The changing pattern of economic relationships in rural Natal, 1834-1914', *Collected Seminar Papers*, (I.C.S., University of London), no. 16 (1973), p.39.
20. CSO 30, no. 171, Shepstone to Pine, 5 April 1853.
21. CSO 30, no. 149, Becker to Pine, 14 February 1853.

magistrate of Ladysmith, accompanied by an unspecified number of African levies, was ordered by Shepstone to move Hadahada and his people. About 80 to 100 men gathered to resist the government force, which opened fire on Hadahada's people, killing five of them. The chief fled and joined the rest of his people whom he had sent ahead to join Chief Wetsi across the Drakensberg²².

The effects of this incident on Hadahada's people aside, it was this kind of situation that the Government was trying to avoid with the Hlubi and Ngwe during the tense period at the end of 1853 when they voiced their complaints to Blaine (see p. 53). In the early part of 1854 Blaine was forced to write to Shepstone dismissing rumours that the "white men would very soon have to fight for their lives; for the Blacks are going to rise up against them"²³. Yet clearly white farmers had sensed an antagonism towards them in this district, for Blaine, in the same report, was obliged to censure two field cornets, T. Howell and C. Labuschagne, for circulating these "extravagant rumours" throughout the area²⁴. During the middle months of 1853 a number of Africans living along the base of the Drakensberg had been moved after being found to have settled on whites' lands²⁵, which would certainly have added to a state of unrest in this district. No confrontation occurred, yet the tensions between farmers and individual Hlubi which the tenancy question gave rise to, were to continue into the late 1850s.

The "land issue" was one source of discord between the Hlubi and Ngwe and the whites in Natal. For a fuller discussion of this discord it is necessary to turn to relations between the administration and the Hlubi and Ngwe.

In late 1850 the Government attempted to take a census and stock return among Africans in Natal. The Africans in general seemed to have resented this. Although the exact reasons are not made clear in official correspondence this resentment appeared to have stemmed from a suspicion of the motives of the Government and a fear that some form of additional

22. GG, no. 253, 11 October 1853.
 23. SNA 4/3/3, no. 47, Blaine to Shepstone, 13 April 1854.
 24. Ibid.
 25. SNA 1/8/4, no. 3, Shepstone to Pine, 27 August 1853.

economic exactions might follow. Such was the reaction that Shepstone felt it necessary to warn his magistrates against the danger of a "combination". He expressed his belief that Langalibalele, Nodada, Zikhali, and Matshana had recently "decided on some plan" of resisting the Government²⁶. With a small white population and limited military resources the Government was particularly sensitive to the dangers of an African "combination" rising up against the whites of Natal and for this reason Shepstone backed down and abandoned the making of a stock-return²⁷.

The following year the Hlubi and Ngwe provided men for a commando against Moshweshwe, the Sotho paramount. Moshweshwe had defeated the British at Viervoet - a battle designed to humble Moshweshwe and bring peace between the rival factions of the Caledon river. The British Resident in the Orange River Sovereignty asked Natal for troops to re-establish control²⁸. Langalibalele initially balked at the idea of raising a levy among his men and Shepstone sent him a message "desiring him to obey Capt. Struben's orders" to join the expedition²⁹. This reluctance to join the expedition was widespread among Africans in the northern districts of Natal³⁰. Despite this, 590 Africans, probably over half of them men from the Hlubi and Ngwe, served on the expedition.

Leading the expedition was Ringler Thompson, the magistrate of Umzinyati. Thompson, from many accounts, appeared to have been an unstable character, often given to "drunken orgies and bouts of frenzy"³¹. His behaviour on the expedition was in keeping with his character. A few days

26. T. Shepstone Papers, 1850-1852, vol. 67, Shepstone to Peppercorne, 17 February 1851.
 27. Ibid.
 28. L.M.Thompson, Survival in Two Worlds - Moshweshwe of Lesotho 1786-1870 (London, 1975), p.145-155.
 29. SNA 1/7/1, Native Complaints and Statements, Memo by Shepstone, 9 August 1851.
 30. Report of Commission of 1852-53, p.25.
 31. L. Young, 'The Native policy of Benjamin Pine in Natal 1850-1855', (unpublished M.A. thesis, Natal University, 1941), p.272.

after the departure of the force Thompson ordered the Ngwe contingent to withdraw as rations were short. Initially they refused but after Phuthini's son, Habile, fell ill, this group, according to their own version, decided to return home³². When they attempted to leave, Thompson was "unapproachable", and apparently refused them the right to depart, construing it as some form of desertion. Thompson ordered a Cape Corps Rifleman to fire over the heads of the Ngwe in an attempt to frighten them into remaining. Thompson allegedly fired one shot himself, wounding Habile in the arm. As the men scuttled for cover Thompson loosed off another shot which hit Habile again, this time proving fatal³³. The incident was pursued in Natal by Buchanan, the editor of the *Witness* and bitter opponent of Lieutenant-Governor Pine, who demanded that Thompson be charged with murder³⁴. Advocate Walker attempted to move for an order for the preparatory examination of Thompson for murder but was unsuccessful because the event had taken place outside Natal's borders³⁵.

Probably as a result of this incident Struben asked Phuthini to send three of his *indunas* to Ladysmith at the end of September. What Struben intended by this summons is not known for Phuthini and his advisors delayed sending the men, and Phuthini was subsequently fined 25 head of cattles for "having sent several insolent messages, refusing to obey the orders sent him by me" (Struben)³⁶. Following the demand Phuthini sent one of his sons as a messenger to Shepstone, explaining that he was "dumb and did not know what he had done"³⁷. There is no evidence to suggest that the Ngwe received any compensation either for Habile's death or the fine imposed by Struben.

- 32. Statement by messengers of Chief Putili, CSO 21, no. 71, 15 September 1851.
- 33. Young, 'Native policy of Benjamin Pine', pp.272-273.
- 34. Ibid., p.273.
- 35. This precedent did not prevent the trial of Langalibalele for murder, although the incident giving rise to the killings also took place outside Natal's borders. (See Chapter 6).
- 36. SNA 2/1/3, (Minute Paper, Putile vs. Struben), 20 October 1851.
- 37. SNA 1/7/1, Native Complaints....Message from Zikali to Shepstone, 5 October 1851.

- 26. J. Shepstone Papers, 1850-1851, vol. 67, Shepstone to Phuthini, 17 February 1851.
- 27. Ibid.
- 28. J.M. Thompson, *Journal of the War in the Natal* (London, 1871), p.162-163.
- 29. The 1851 Native Complaints and Statements, from Phuthini, 2 August 1851.
- 30. Report of Commissioner of 1851-52, p.12.
- 31. L. Young, 'The Native Policy of Benjamin Pine in Natal 1850-1852', *South African M.A. Thesis*, Natal University, 1961, p.171.

The administration did agree to compensate those men who had participated in the expedition, yet it took three years before full payment was made. In 1852 the Ngwe, probably angered by the outcome of serving on the expedition, refused to pay their tax on a hundred huts. They made it explicit that they would not pay in full until total compensation had been received³⁸. The next year the Hlubi and Zikhali's Ngwane refused to pay the hut tax until they too had received full remuneration for which they had made "frequent applications"³⁹. This failure to reward the Africans stirred the conscience of one colonist, who, in a letter to the *Natal Witness* demanded, "In the name of justice, why this injustice, and breach of faith?"⁴⁰. Finally, in 1854, Blaine was given a sum of £255 lls. 6d. to allocate to the participants, though by this time it was difficult to establish exactly who had served⁴¹. In 1855 all three chiefdoms paid up the arrears on their taxes from the previous two years.

In the middle of 1855 Blaine left the Weenen division and was replaced by a new magistrate, John MacFarlane, who arrived to take up his post in August or September. MacFarlane, who was to play a key role in the history of the Hlubi and Ngwe from 1855, had arrived in Natal from Scotland where he had allegedly been a "Highland Laird"⁴². In 1851 he and his three brothers purchased land in the Bushman's river area⁴³. These were small plots however and by 1852 they had acquired larger farms around the village of Weenen. In 1852 and 1853 John MacFarlane had given evidence to the Native Affairs Commission where he had strongly recommended the abolition of chiefs' powers⁴⁴. In this respect his views differed quite strongly from Blaine's, who believed that the "authority and respect (of Africans) is centred on the person of the chief"⁴⁵.

38. CSO 30, part III, no. 214, Blaine to Shepstone, 17 May 1853.
 39. SNA 1/3/2, no. 108, Blaine to Shepstone, 5 October 1853.
 40. *Natal Witness*, 21 January 1853, Letter from 'Colonist'.
 41. SNA 1/3/3, no. 61, Blaine to Shepstone, 13 May 1854.
 42. A.F. Hattersley, The Natal Settlers 1849-1854 (Pietermaritzburg, 1949), p.6.
 43. *Natal Witness*, 9 May 1851.
 44. Proceedings of Native Commission 1852-1853, Part III, p.48.
 45. SNA 1/3/4, no. 98, Blaine to Shepstone, 17 July 1855.

MacFarlane became involved in an incident with the Hlubi almost immediately after assuming office. Early in 1855 an outbreak of bovine pleuropneumonia (lung-sickness) had occurred in the colony. Although the disease was more prevalent in the low-lying areas, later in the year cattle belonging to the Hlubi contracted the malady.

Langalibalele was ordered by Capt. Howell, on MacFarlane's instructions, to move all his diseased cattle to an appointed place. He refused and this occasioned a visit from MacFarlane, his interpreter G. Rudolph and Howell in early October 1855 for the purpose of assembling the people at Langalibalele's homestead and enforcing obedience⁴⁶. The Africans resisted the order to assemble and a small group refused to lay down their assegais, three men becoming particularly hostile and threatening to throw their weapons⁴⁷. The officials retreated and MacFarlane called out the field cornets of the different wards who assembled on 9 October together with a party of 30 white farmers, who had enthusiastically joined the levy to arrest the offenders⁴⁸. The group which had refused to lay down their arms were apprehended, tried and sentenced on the spot, some to lashings and some to three months imprisonment. The sick cattle were either destroyed or sent away to the place appointed for them⁴⁹. MacFarlane was rebuked by the acting Lieutenant-Governor for not having obtained prior permission to call out the levy⁵⁰, and Shepstone took the opportunity of issuing a circular to all magistrates telling them not to call out any armed force without the prior consent of the Lieutenant-Governor, except in the most extreme cases⁵¹.

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- 46. SNA 1/3/4, no. 140, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 6 October 1855.
 - 47. Ibid.
 - 48. SNA 1/3/4, no. 147, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 11 October 1855.
 - 49. Ibid.
 - 50. SNA 1/8/5, pp.471, Shepstone to MacFarlane, 22 October 1855.
 - 51. Memo to SNA 1/3/5 no. 135, MacFarlane to Shepstone, n.d.

The remainder of the year was spent in the preparation for the expedition, and in the early part of the year the Hlubi were ordered to assemble at the appointed place. The Hlubi refused to do so, and MacFarlane, with his interpreter G. Rudolph and Howell, proceeded to the Hlubi homestead in early October 1855. The Hlubi resisted the order to assemble, and a small group refused to lay down their weapons. MacFarlane called out the field cornets of the different wards, who assembled on 9 October together with a party of 30 white farmers. The group which had refused to lay down their arms were apprehended, tried and sentenced on the spot. The sick cattle were either destroyed or sent away to the place appointed for them. MacFarlane was rebuked by the acting Lieutenant-Governor for not having obtained prior permission to call out the levy, and Shepstone issued a circular to all magistrates.

- 52. SNA 1/3/4, no. 140, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 6 Oct 1855.
- 53. SNA 1/3/4, no. 147, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 11 Oct 1855.
- 54. SNA 1/8/5, pp. 471, Shepstone to MacFarlane, 22 Oct 1855.
- 55. SNA 1/3/5, no. 135, MacFarlane to Shepstone, n.d.

A month later the Ngwe were fined 200 head by MacFarlane for the theft of nine horses from a Mr. A. Boes of Winburg. Phuthini admitted the theft of these and other horses in the district by his people⁵². Phuthini prevaricated, requested that a portion be payable in cash (the lung-sickness epidemic being at its worst) and was eventually fined a further twenty head of cattle⁵³. Whether the full amount was ever paid is not clear from the available evidence, but what cattle were paid mostly contracted lung-sickness later, and the thieves actually responsible fled from Natal⁵⁴.

The year 1855 can be seen as a watershed in relations between the Hlubi and Ngwe and the Government. To the Africans the uncertainties of the previous six years, coupled with the stress of the lung-sickness and the appointment of a more authoritarian magistrate, seemed to find manifestation in these incidents in 1855.

These early events took place against a background of insecurity within Natal and an uncertainty of policy regarding African administration. Firstly, Mpande would not give the Government any assurance that he would not cross into Natal to retrieve what he considered to be his people and property. The white population of Natal continued to live in dread of an attack by Mpande. In 1851 for example a commando was contemplated to guard against border incursions by the Zulu state, but the inhabitants of Pietermaritzburg strongly opposed its formation, fearing that it would leave the town open to attack⁵⁵. The Government was concerned to establish peaceful relations with Mpande during this period, a task which occupied

52. SNA 1/3/4, no. 176, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 19 November 1855.
 53. Ibid.
 54. SNA 1/3/5, no. 196, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 21 December 1855.
 55. Natal Witness, 31 January 1851.

56. F. J. Lapping, 'The Zululand Expedition and the Government of Natal', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, 1951, p. 10.
 57. J. J. Hall, 'The Zululand Expedition and the Government of Natal', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, 1951, p. 10.
 58. SNA 1/3/4, no. 176, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 19 November 1855.

The... between... in all... with the...
 immediately after...
 Phuthini prevaricated, requested that a portion be payable in cash (the lung-sickness epidemic being at its worst) and was eventually fined a further twenty head of cattle⁵³. Whether the full amount was ever paid is not clear from the available evidence, but what cattle were paid mostly contracted lung-sickness later, and the thieves actually responsible fled from Natal⁵⁴.

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 53. Ibid.
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 55. Natal Witness, 31 January 1851.

56. F. J. Lapping, 'The Zululand Expedition and the Government of Natal', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, 1951, p. 10.
 57. J. J. Hall, 'The Zululand Expedition and the Government of Natal', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, 1951, p. 10.
 58. SNA 1/3/4, no. 176, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 19 November 1855.

much of Lieutenant-Governor Pine's time⁵⁶.

Secondly, a serious breach had occurred between Shepstone and Pine by 1851. Pine was opposed to the "Locations Policy", and attempted to alter it by the establishment of a Commission in 1852 to examine the desirability and feasibility of continuing such a course. The majority of the Commissioners were land-owners whose interests did not coincide with the continuation of the locations in their existing form. Thus the smooth running of African administration was hindered by dissension within the Government, and Shepstone felt undermined by Pine's appointment of magistrates of whom the S.N.A. did not approve⁵⁷. The difficulties faced by the administration in the formation of a common policy in regard to African affairs must have made it extremely difficult for the Hlubi and Ngwe to come to terms with their new overlords.

Quite how far Phuthini and Langalibalele understood their position as chiefs in a colonial situation is not clear. They were not prepared to accept a position of submission as is indicated by the way in which they held out for compensation after the Commando of 1851. Langalibalele went straight to Shepstone, by-passing the local authorities, when he sought redress of grievances. For example, in 1851 his uncle, Naruka, arrived in Pietermaritzburg complaining about Captain Struben's attitude to Langalibalele, reminding Shepstone that the Hlubi leader "was a great and influential chief" who disliked having unilateral decisions foisted onto him by a regional magistrate⁵⁸.

Yet the danger of specifically committing an act of disobedience had been forcefully underlined by the treatment meted out to Hadahada's people. Thus the ruling groups of the Hlubi and Ngwe were co-operative when they saw fit. For example Langalibalele was prepared to hand over

56. P.H. Lapping, 'The Influence Panda had on the settlement of Natal', Chapter V, passim.
57. J.C. Hall, 'Government policy and public attitudes during the administration of Natal by Lieutenant-Governor Benjamin C.C. Pine, 1850-1855'; (unpublished M.A. thesis, Natal University, 1969), pp.6-7.
58. SNA 2/1/3, Minute Paper, 11 September 1851.

culprits guilty of cattle theft⁵⁹, and the Hlubi fulfilled their task of guarding against Bushman raids in a manner which earned the gratitude of the colonists⁶⁰. Thus despite the vagaries of the administrative policy of the whites and despite the appointment of MacFarlane, the Hlubi and Ngwe hierarchies seemed to have understood the limits to which they could exercise their own authority within the colonial dispensation.

If it was difficult for the Hlubi and Ngwe to come to terms with their new rulers on an administrative level, the economic adjustments they were forced to make were often a source of greater difficulty.

The first of these difficulties was centred around the transition to a market economy. In order to pay taxes and rents it was necessary either to sell off cattle or surplus agricultural produce or to work for whites. In some parts of Natal, particularly around the larger towns of Durban and Pietermaritzburg, it was possible for Africans to sell their agricultural surplus. In Durban for example it was reported that Africans were earning 5s a week by selling produce in the town⁶¹. In the area of the Hlubi and Ngwe locations however there was not, at this stage, a ready market for African-grown vegetables or mealies, although some of the white farmers may have purchased cattle from Africans. Consequently many of the members of the Hlubi and Ngwe may have been obliged to work for local whites in order to raise revenue for payments to the Government.

For example one finds, in the early 1850s, evidence of Hlubi working on the farms of three Voortrekkers, J. Stadler, Gert Maritz and Hans Botha⁶². The number of farmers in the district was growing and in 1852 it was reported that 150 white farmers had recently moved into the Ladysmith / Bushman's river area⁶³. A very incomplete return shows that by

59. SNA 1/3/1, no. 127, Struben to Shepstone, 13 December 1851.
 60. Anon. Kafir Revolt in Natal, Introduction; F.E. Colenso and E. Durnford, History of the Zulu War and its Origins (London, 1881), p.17.
 61. Natal Witness, 21 March 1851.
 62. SNA 1/1/3, no. 77, Stadler to Shepstone, 19 September 1850; SNA 1/3/2, no. 119, Blaine to Shepstone, 25 October 1853.
 63. Natal Witness, 30 January 1852.

1858 seventeen farmers were employing Hlubi on their farms⁶⁴. It seems that in the early 1850s individuals of the Hlubi and Ngwe were providing labour for most of these farmers. These people may have been dissatisfied with living in the location under their chief or they could have been forced to enter into employment with whites. Whatever the reason, they were entering into a market economy where they sold their labour. In addition, for whites in the villages of Weenen and Estcourt it was clear that the Hlubi were the nearest and largest source of labour. A request from Weenen (roughly 30 miles from the Hlubi location) showed the inhabitants keen to "substitute the native labour they have at present by holding out inducements to the kralls of Lalla Bellela's Tribe"⁶⁵.

There is very little evidence which could help clarify how those Africans not working for white men were raising the revenue to make payments to the Government. It can only be assumed that some individuals must have been selling off surplus produce or cattle.

The other means of making money was by temporary employment. For example by serving on the Sovereignty Expedition of 1851, men could have earned sufficient money to pay taxes. More specifically men received cash payment from temporary employment on government projects such as the building of roads and bridges, although this type of work was not popular. This *isibhalo* system, or the system empowering magistrates to demand labour from African chiefs, was begun in 1848, and apart from a four-year period from 1854-1858, when it was discontinued for fear of a "native uprising", it remained in existence throughout the nineteenth century⁶⁶. Although the men recruited were only meant to work on public works, magistrates could use their "legitimate influence" to induce chiefs to provide labour for white farmers⁶⁷. The system was disliked by the chiefs who were placed in the invidious position of often having to coerce their followers into the work parties, thereby endangering the bond of loyalty between chief and

64. SNA 1/3/7, no. 158, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 6 November 1858.
 65. SNA 1/1/3, no. 32, Field-Cornet J. Gregory to Secretary to Government, 6 April 1850.
 66. Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, pp.122-124.
 67. *Ibid.*, p.123.

subject. The system was no more than a form of forced labour, legitimised by Shepstone on the grounds that it was a "prerogative which all native chiefs enjoy", and it was reasoned, if the Lieutenant-Governor was Supreme Chief, then he had the right to compel his subjects to work. The *isibhalo* system was often a boon to white farmers though on occasions chiefs called up men already employed with whites to work on public works⁶⁸. Judging by the repeated failure of chiefs (Langalibalele and Phuthini being no exception) to raise the required number of men for these work parties, it is clear that they were not popular among the Hlubi and Ngwe. However it could have been another source of cash with which individuals could have paid rents or taxes.

Africans did not participate in the market just as sellers. They were also buyers. On a visit to the Hlubi in the course of a tour of Natal in 1854, Bishop Colenso noticed that the men "were mounted, contrary to the usual practice of the Kafirs"⁶⁹. Unless the horses were stolen, they could only have been purchased by a cash payment, as would have been the accoutrements (bits, bridles).

It is clear that a significant number of families were beginning to leave the location in the early 1850s and were entering a market economy. It appears that initially attempts to induce the Hlubi and Ngwe out of the location were resisted, judging by Blaine's report of October 1853. However certain individuals, particularly the younger men, may have come to see definite advantages in removing themselves from the area of the chief's authority. Under the colonial Government, chiefs could now no longer exercise the same degree of control over the productive process as they had done in the Zulu kingdom. A dissatisfied youngman, paying tribute to his chief for no immediate return, could hie away from the group to which he belonged with much more ease than he had been able to formerly. Once settled on Crown lands or privately owned farms they were free from the jurisdiction of tribal hierarchies. This point is a strongly voiced complaint of chiefs in

68. Natal Mercury, 4 March 1864.
 69. J. Colenso, *Ten Weeks in Natal* (Cambridge, 1855), p.123.

nineteenth century Natal⁷⁰.

In Hlubi society, as in Zulu society, "social power, that is the power to produce, control, coerce, is linked with the amount of human energy expended: there is a significant correlation between the power of a social group and the number of individuals making up that group"⁷¹. The departure of men from the Hlubi and Ngwe locations would have dissipated the power of these groups.

Measures taken by Langalibalele in the early 1850s in an attempt to maintain or extend control over his adherents strongly suggests that he was reacting to a trend to migration away from the location. In 1851 he tried to extend the area of his location to include individuals who had settled on white-owned lands or on Crown lands just outside the location. Struben's response was to warn him not to "clandestinely take away his people from the employment of white people...such conduct being entirely opposed to the welfare and interests of the Queen's subjects"⁷². Early in 1855 Langalibalele applied, apparently successfully, to bring "fifteen kraals" contiguous to the location, actually into the location⁷³. He also attempted to prevent his people from leaving the location. In 1852, for example, he refused to allow six men to leave for work (of an unspecified nature) in the Ladysmith district, for which he was fined 25 head of cattle by Struben⁷⁴.

70. See S. Marks, Reluctant Rebellion - The 1906-1908 Disturbances in Natal (Oxford, 1970), p.42 and NBB 1882, Evidence taken Before the Natal Native Commission 1881-82, evidence of Teteluku, p.178.
71. J.J. Guy, 'Production and Exchange in the Zulu kingdom', p.14.
72. SNA 2/1/3, Minute Paper, Putile vs. Struben, 11 September 1851.
73. SNA 1/3/4, no. 95, Blaine to Shepstone, 10 July 1855; SNA 1/8/5, pp.419-420, Shepstone to Blaine, 18 July 1855.
74. SNA 1/7/1(a), Native Complaints and Statements, 14 February 1852.

A second course was to encourage and welcome the settlement of refugees in his location. In 1855 Dr. Blaine reported that, "it is sufficiently obvious that Balele and his whole tribe are leagued to give every possible assistance to the arrival and settlement of refugees"⁷⁵. On this occasion he was fined ten head of cattle by Shepstone for being "guilty of neglect in not reporting to the magistrate the arrival of these men"⁷⁶. Eight months later Langalibalele was again cautioned by the magistrate (MacFarlane) for having allowed 20 to 30 men to settle in the location without prior permission. MacFarlane reported that he had had Langalibalele "twice before me as to this matter"⁷⁷. It is difficult to establish who these "refugees" were. The majority seem to have been Hlubi. For example the group of 20 to 30 men who entered in October 1855 were led by one of Langalibalele's relatives, Phakathwayo. In November MacFarlane reported that 20 to 150 people a day had been seen crossing from the Swazi country into the vicinity of the Hlubi location⁷⁸. Yet others were crossing through "Zikalali's pass" from Basutoland⁷⁹. It seems very likely that these people were individuals from remnants of the original Hlubi chiefdom that had been dispersed after the Ngwane attack on them in 1819-1820. They might possibly have been a particularly large number of people arriving in 1855 to check on the condition of their cattle or families following the lung-sickness epidemic early in 1855. The significant point is that Langalibalele seems to have been encouraging as many of his subjects as possible to live in the location under his jurisdiction in order to maintain his power and status.

It must be noted that two other factors made Langalibalele's task in keeping his adherents within the location all the more difficult. The first of these was the cattle losses that had been suffered in the move of

75. SNA 1/3/4, no. 26, Blaine to Shepstone, 20 February 1855.
 76. SNA 1/8/5, pp.183, Shepstone to Blaine, 27 February 1855.
 77. SNA 1/3/4, no. 163, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 30 October 1855.
 78. SNA 1/3/4, no. 175, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 19 November 1855.
 79. SNA 1/3/6, pp.178-179, Shepstone to MacFarlane, 4 December 1855.

[Faint, mostly illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. Some words like "refugees", "location", and "jurisdiction" are faintly visible.]

1849 from the Newcastle district. The second factor was the natural disasters of 1854 and 1855. In 1854 there had been, according to the traditional version, an extremely severe locust plague⁸⁰. Bishop Colenso, in his visit of 1854, noticed that the Hlubi were "dirty" and "dingy" a fact which, upon inquiry, was put down to the "sickliness of the season or the badness of the grass"⁸¹. Many cattle had perished as a consequence of this plague and the Hlubi, Colenso noted, were wearing the skins of the dead cattle. The lung-sickness epidemic of the following year, coming so soon after the poor season of 1854, must have been particularly crippling to the Hlubi and the Ngwe. In times of economic hardship men would have been forced to seek alternative means of support; in this case working for wages with the colonists. Thus members of the Hlubi and Ngwe would have been forced to leave the locations not only by legislation but also because of economic distress.

The first six years under colonial rule were, for reasons which have been outlined, a period of re-adjustment within Hlubi and Ngwe society. These people had had to ensure that they had sufficient land on which to live and had to find means of making the optimum use of the resources of their environment. They had had to come to terms with their white neighbours who looked upon them as a source of labour or, through rents, as a source of revenue. They had had to come to terms with the impositions of the administration which taxed them and tried to force them into the service of the state and of the white settlers. They had also to try to re-coup the losses incurred by the removal of 1849, the poor season of 1854 and the lung-sickness of 1855. An attempt has been made to show that some of the Hlubi and Ngwe faced these difficulties by taking innovative action; by choosing the best option open to them in a system which linked them inevitably into a market economy. In these years it was also clear that Langalibalele and Phuthini were attempting to come to some form of accommodation with an administration

80. W. von Fintel, 'Traditions and history of the Amahlubi tribe', *Native Teachers Journal*, vol. XV (1932), p.235.
 81. J.W. Colenso, *Ten Weeks in Natal*, p.123.

that was concerned to include them under the jurisdiction of a centralised bureaucracy. The chiefs had also to try and retain control over their subjects in a dispensation that allowed homestead proprietors and young men to move more easily out of the range of their control. On one level of Hlubi and Ngwe society the chiefs and their supporters were attempting to perpetuate the "traditional" system and perhaps even to enlarge both the geographical span and institutionalised scope of their authority, while it can be argued that on another level some individuals under their control were attempting to re-establish themselves on terms which allowed them a greater freedom of action. The patterns of Hlubi and Ngwe involvement in the colonial system became clearer after the particularly stressful years of the early 1850s.

It was in the early 1850s, then, that the Hlubi and Ngwe societies were faced with a new set of circumstances. These circumstances brought new possibilities for expansion and development in the Hlubi and Ngwe societies.

Attention will first be given to the labour market in Natal during the middle of the 1850s. Although a large number of white landowners in Natal were by 1855, extracting their Natal agricultural production, there were still a number of white landowners who were not only interested in the land but also in the labour market. It was this latter group which was particularly interested in the labour market and it was to their advantage that the labour market was expanded to include a greater number of African labourers.

A number of factors restricted the growth of these farms in Natal. Firstly the landowners were generally small-scale farmers who were interested in the land but not in the labour market. In 1850, for example, the landowners in Natal were generally small-scale farmers who were interested in the land but not in the labour market. In 1850, for example, the landowners in Natal were generally small-scale farmers who were interested in the land but not in the labour market.

1. Natal Mercury, 11 January 1854.
2. Natal Mercury, 11 January 1854, p. 1.

1854 from the Natal Herald. The Natal Herald was the first newspaper of Natal and was published in Durban. It was founded in 1842 and was the first newspaper published in Natal. It was the first newspaper published in Natal and was the first newspaper published in Natal. It was the first newspaper published in Natal and was the first newspaper published in Natal.

The first six years under colonial rule were, for reasons which have been outlined, a period of readjustment for the Hlubi and Ngwe societies. These people had had to come to terms with the new land on which to live and had to find means of making the greatest use of the resources of their environment. They had had to come to terms with their white neighbours who looked upon them as a source of labour or, through taxes, as a source of revenue. They had had to come to terms with the imposition of the administration which taxed their land and tried to force them into the service of the state and of the white settlers. They had also to try to recover the losses incurred by the removal of their land to the new farms of the white settlers in 1850. An attempt had been made to show that some of the Hlubi and Ngwe societies were qualified to take the initiative in developing the new land on their own terms in a system which looked favourably on their knowledge. In these years it was the Hlubi and Ngwe societies who were attempting to come to some form of accommodation with the administration.

80. U. von Steinhilber, 'Traditions and History of Natal', in 'The Natal Mercury' (Durban), 11 January 1854, p. 1.
81. Natal Mercury, 11 January 1854, p. 1.

CHAPTER FOUR

INVOLVEMENT WITH A WIDER WORLD (1856-1864)

The period between 1856 and 1864 was one of a growing involvement of numbers of Hlubi and Ngwe in the economic life of Natal and of South Africa. Two forms of economic activity became more clearly defined during these years. One was migrant labour, which began in the late 1850s, and the other was peasant production, which became visible among the Hlubi and Ngwe in the early 1860s. These developments brought new problems for leaders and commoners in Hlubi and Ngwe society.

Attention will first be given to the labour problem in Natal during the middle years of the 1850s. Although a large number of white land-owners in Natal, were, by 1855, extracting rent from African agricultural producers, others still hoped to place their farming activities on a commercial basis. An essential pre-requisite for these farmers was that labour should be available to them, and they became increasingly strident in their demands for the "locations" system to be altered in ways that would release a greater number of Africans into the labour market.

A number of factors frustrated the efforts of these farmers to obtain labour. Firstly the lung-sickness epidemic, which had forced many Africans throughout Natal to seek employment with whites¹ began to wane in 1856. After this it appears that many Africans left their employment with whites and returned to their homes in the locations or on Crown lands. Secondly the contracts of many of the refugees from the Zulu kingdom, who were indentured to work for white farmers for three years, expired after 1854 or 1855² and many contracts were not renewed. Thirdly, Pine

1. Natal Witness, 11 January 1856.
2. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.32.

left Natal in March 1855 and was replaced by Lieutenant-Governor Scott who arrived in Natal in November 1856. Scott, unlike his predecessor, was unsympathetic to the demands of the commercial farmers in Natal, and "stood up steadily to the mounting opposition of the colonists to the locations system"³. Thus while there was an ever-increasing demand for African labour from commercial farmers, certain forces were operating to prevent a flow of labour out of the locations.

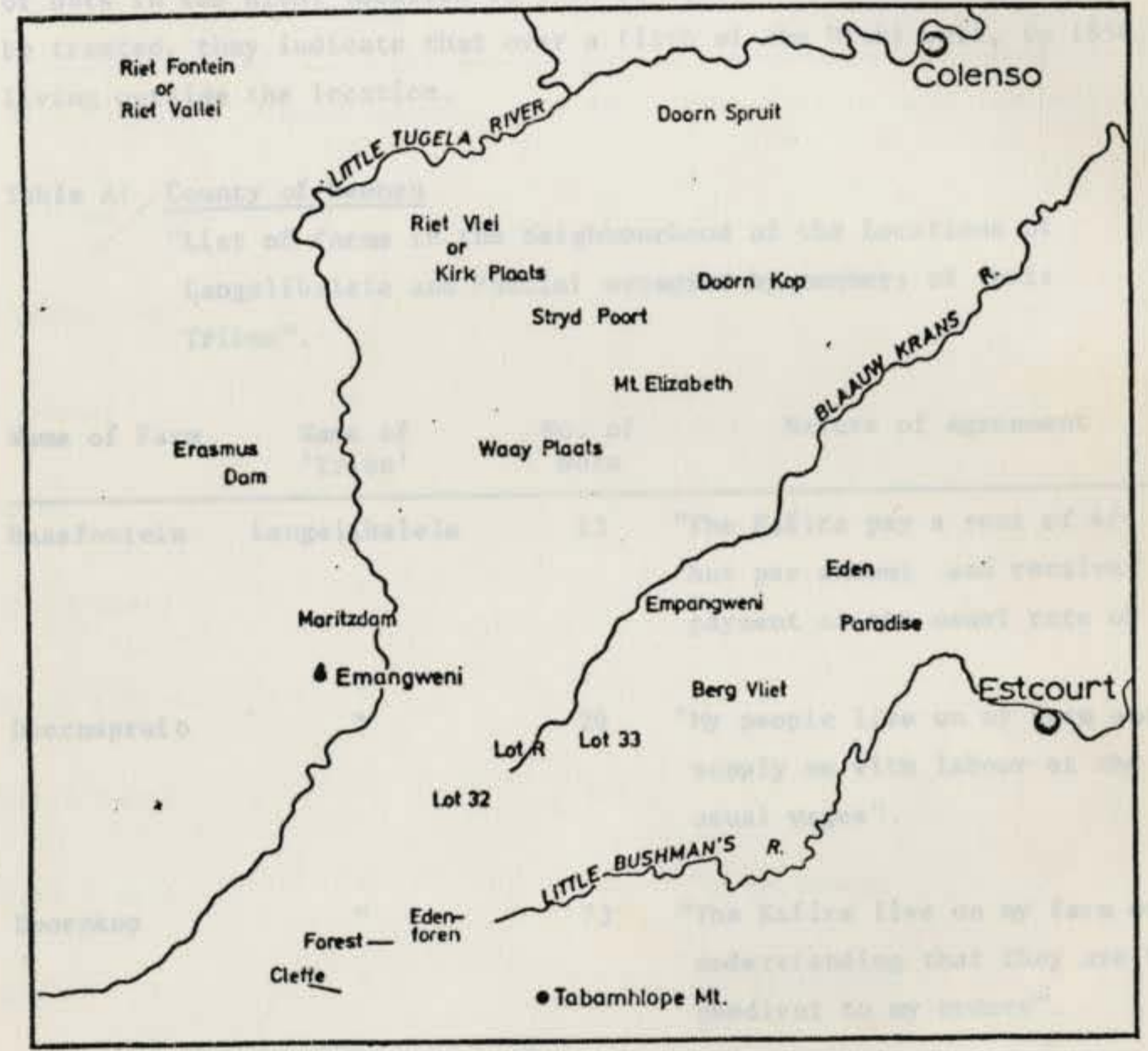
However the administration could not ignore the demands of this group of settlers, particularly after the establishment of the Legislative Council in 1856 which "provided a forum in which the colonial representatives could attack the Shepstonian system"⁴. Thus certain measures were taken to try and force Africans to seek employment with whites. For example late in 1855 magistrates were empowered to eject "squatters" from private lands and Crown lands. In 1857 Africans living on private farms were exempted from hut tax if they were working for the farm owners or alternatively paying the owners a rental⁵. This measure was introduced to make working for white men more attractive. These moves were not strong enough to force or attract any significant number of Africans into employment⁶, and from the settlers' point of view were a failure. But they were an indication that the administration was sensitive to the complaints of the commercial farmers.

The most effective mechanism at the disposal of the Natal administration for attempting to pressure Africans in Natal into employment remained the hut tax, although the tax was initially not introduced with this specific purpose. It is impossible accurately to ascertain the extent to which the hut tax was effective in forcing individuals of the Hlubi and Ngwe into work but a tabulated Return compiled by MacFarlane in 1858 reveals that there were 583 huts belonging to the followers of Langalibalele on private farms in the vicinity of the location⁷. This Return (Table A)

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3. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, p.7.
 4. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.39.
 5. S.T. van der Horst, Native Labour in South Africa (London, 1942), p.50.
 6. Ibid., p.50.
 7. SNA 1/3/7, no. 158, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 6 November 1858.

MAP 3

WHITE FARMS IN VICINITY OF HLUBI AND NGWE LOCATIONS, 1858.



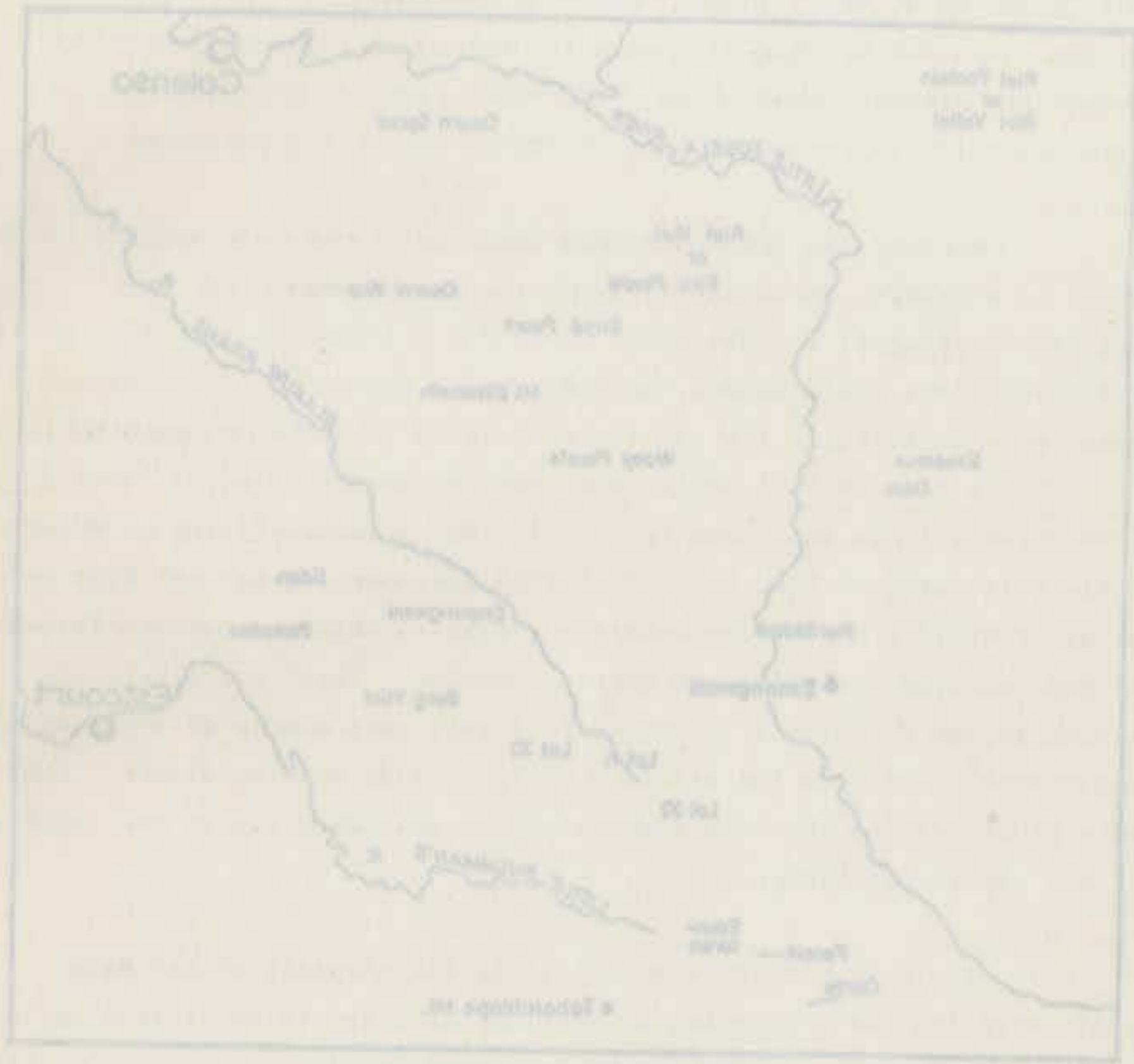
left hand in March 1858 and was returned by Lieutenant-Governor Bots
 who arrived in Natal in November 1854. Bots' policy was to
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 and "stood up steadily to the mounting opposition of the colonists
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 extent to which the hut tax was effective in forcing individuals of the
 Hlubi and Ngwe into work but a tentative figure compiled by historians in 1939
 reveals that there were 283 huts belonging to the followers of Isidore
 on private farms in the vicinity of the locations. This figure (Table A)

1. Brooking and Webb: History of Natal, p. 7.
 2. White: History of Natal, p. 16.
 3. R.T. van der Horst: Native Labour in South Africa
 (London, 1947), p. 30.
 4. 1854, p. 25.
 5. 1855, no. 133, Declaration to Parliament, 6 November 1855.

Berg Vliet "The native was to pay 2/6 per
 year which I never got."
 "I pay 5/- a year & I have to work for the
 white man for 100 days"
 "The boys to work for white"
 1. 1855, no. 133, Declaration to Parliament, 6 November 1855.
 2. Colenso: The Natal in 1854, p. 1,000.
 3. Isidore: The Natal in 1854, p. 1,000.
 4. 1858.



was in fact incomplete because MacFarlane only managed to obtain information from seventeen farmers. A rather conservative estimate by Reverend Guldenpfennig of the Berlin Missionary Society put the number of huts in the Hlubi location in 1858 at 2,000⁸. If these figures can be trusted, they indicate that over a fifth of the Hlubi were, in 1858, living outside the location.

Table A: County of Weenen
 "List of farms in the Neighbourhood of the Locations of Langalibalele and Phutini occupied by members of their Tribes".

Name of Farm	Name of 'Tribe'	No. of Huts	Nature of Agreement
Haasfontein	Langalibalele	13	"The Kafirs pay a rent of 4/- per hut per annum; and receive payment at the usual rate of wages".
Doornspruit	"	29	"My people live on my farm and supply me with labour at the usual wages".
Doornkop	"	73	"The Kafirs live on my farm on the understanding that they are to be obedient to my orders".
Berg Vliet	"	250	"The Kafirs engaged to pay 2/- per hut which I never get".
Riet Vallei	"	33	"I pay 5/- a month to such of the Kafirs that work for me"
Opperman's Kraal	"	27	"The boys to work for wages"

8. Berliner Missions Berichte (Berlin 1858), p.32. Colenso gives the number of Hlubi in 1848 as 7,000. Guldenpfennig gives the number in the location as 6,000 in 1858.

Table A (Continued):

Name of Farm	Name of 'Tribe'	No. of Huts	Nature of Agreement
Raaths Hoek	Langalibalele	13	"The boys to work for wages"
Lindques Lager	"	3	"
Erasmus Dam	"	2	"
Noodhulp	"	1	"
Malta	"	2	"
Rietfontein	"	1	"
Mount Elizabeth	"	15	"
Stryd Poort	"	24	"
Waaï Plaats	"	82	No agreement
Eden	"	5	No agreement
Paradise	"	18	"I have no agreement with my Kafirs, but they understand that they have to do any work I require of them. Wages 5/- a month".

Appended to SNA 1/3/7, no. 67, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 7 May 1858.

was in fact incomplete because the names of the huts were not entered in detail in the information from the various farmers. A number of the names of the huts in the list are in the hands of the Government. It is clear that the huts were not all living outside the location.

Table A: County of Beaufort
List of farms in the neighbourhood of the locations of Langalibalele and Noodhulp occupied by members of the 'Tribe'.

Name of Farm	Name of 'Tribe'	No. of Huts	Nature of Agreement
Kaasfontein	Langalibalele	13	"The Kafirs pay a rent of 4/- per hut per annum, and receive payment at the usual rate of wages."
Doornfontein	"	12	"The Kafirs live on my farm and supply me with labour at the usual wages."
Doornkop	"	13	"The Kafirs live on my farm on the understanding that they are to be obedient to my orders."
Paarvlei	"	200	"The Kafirs engaged to pay 15/- per hut which I never get."
Diepvallei	"	13	"I pay 5/- a month to each of the Kafirs that work for me."
Oppeken's Kraal	"	57	"The boys to work for wages."

Mr. Colenso gives the number of huts in the neighbourhood of the locations of Langalibalele and Noodhulp as 1,000 in 1858.

It is impossible to assess what proportion of these people were working on these farms of their own choice or what proportion were obliged to work in order to pay taxes. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that a substantial number of Hlubi (about 1,500 to 2,000) were working or living on white-owned land.

Despite this, there is evidence that white farmers were demanding African labour in Weenen district during the late 1850s. For example in 1857 a local farmer, C. Lotter, severely criticised MacFarlane for failing to obtain workers for him. MacFarlane explained the reason for his failure to Shepstone:

The continuing state of uneasy relations between Mr. Lotter and his black neighbours is such that the feelings among the Kafirs against Mr. Lotter is so strong that I have not been able to prevail upon a single Kafir to enter his service during my term of office⁹.

In 1862, a farmer from the Bushman's river area, close to the Hlubi and Ngwe, complained to Shepstone that he could not even obtain servants let alone farm workers, and that this situation had prevailed for the previous three or four years¹⁰.

In the vicinity of their locations it appears as though the Hlubi and Ngwe were in demand as labourers but that they exercised some discretion when it came to choosing for whom they might work.

Consideration will now be given to those Hlubi and Ngwe who were working elsewhere in Natal or further afield. In 1858 MacFarlane reported that "considerable numbers of the tribes of Potini and Langalibalele are in the custom of going to the Cape Colony to hire as

9. SNA 1/3/6, no. 84, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 27 February 1857.
10. SNA 1/1/2, no. 81, G. Scheepers to Shepstone, 6 August 1862.

Table 4 (Continued)
Date of farm
Type of farm
No. of Hlubi
No. of Ngwe
No. of Potini
No. of Langalibalele
No. of other tribes
Total
Remarks

11	Legal/Baraka									
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Appended to SNA 1/1/2, no. 85, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 1 May 1858.

servants"¹¹. The reason for this, MacFarlane argued, was because higher wages could be obtained at the Cape. These people were temporary workers in the Cape, a point noted by MacFarlane, and later, when larger numbers of Natal Africans appeared to be working in the Cape, by the *Natal Witness*¹². A year later, in 1859, MacFarlane reported that:

...it is well known to all the chiefs and people in the Weenen district that much higher rates of wages prevail in the lower than in the upper Districts of the Colony and considerable numbers of labourers are at the moment in service on the coastal lands, and elsewhere in the lower districts, at these increased rates¹³.

MacFarlane went on to suggest that it would be advisable, in his opinion, to increase wages on government projects from 5s. to 10s. a month in order to compete with these higher wages.

Thus by the end of their second decade in Natal a pattern of labour migrancy seems to have been quite well established among the Hlubi and Ngwe. All Africans in Natal had to raise money in order to pay their taxes or meet cash demands of the Government, such as fines. With "traditional" means of producing a surplus, such as raiding or hunting, closed to them, some of the Hlubi and Ngwe turned to exchanging agricultural surplus or cattle with the colonists in return for money. It is also apparent that increasing numbers of them were becoming wage-labourers in order to raise cash. Through the sale of agricultural produce or cattle or by the sale of their labour the Hlubi and Ngwe were incorporated into a market system. However within this system there were alternative means of earning money. By the late 1850s some of the Hlubi and Ngwe, instead of seeking employment at low wages with local white farmers, turned to travelling longer distances in order to earn the higher wages available at the Cape or in southern Natal.

11. SNA 1/3/7, no. 67, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 7 May 1858.
 12. *Natal Witness*, 9 January 1863.
 13. SNA 1/3/8, no. 50, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 4 October 1859.

Connected with the labour issue was the demand placed by the authorities on chiefs to provide men for work on Government projects (at this time road and harbour building). This institution was the most hated by Africans in Natal¹⁴. Official demands for labour were made to Langalibalele and Phuthini several times in the late 1850s and early 1860s. In the early months of 1857 Langalibalele provided only 80, out of a requested 150 men, to help build a road between the Thukela and the Drakensberg¹⁵. A few months later MacFarlane was unable to obtain a single African from his district when asked by the Surveyor-General for the provision of 100 men. MacFarlane reported that he had made "every effort" to obtain them but informed the Native Affairs department that he "had no reason to expect that I will be successful in the future"¹⁶. In 1861 Langalibalele was threatened with a £10 fine for refusing to furnish labourers for the harbour works. However the dispute came to nothing as the project was postponed by the contractors¹⁷.

It has been suggested in the previous chapter that Langalibalele and Phuthini actively encouraged their adherents to settle under their authority in the locations rather than on white-owned land. Clearly the departure of their adherents for white farms in the Weenen district, for southern Natal, for the Cape or for work with the Government represented a whittling away of the chiefs' power and influence. It is clear that Langalibalele opposed the Government's demands for labour where he felt he safely could. Owing to lack of evidence though, it is difficult to outline any distinct strategy on the part of the Hlubi and Ngwe ruling hierarchies in response to this trend.

However, correspondence between MacFarlane and the authorities in Pietermaritzburg in 1858 points to one way in which Langalibalele reacted. In that year Langalibalele requested permission from MacFarlane to be allowed to move from his location and settle around the sources of

14. Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.125.
 For an earlier discussion of the *isibhale* system see Ch.III.
 15. SNA 1/3/6, no. 69, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 16 February 1857.
 16. SNA 1/3/6, no. 173, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 27 July 1857.
 17. SNA 1/3/10, no. 127, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 3 June 1861.

the Buffalo and Sunday's river, adjacent to his former homeland in the Zulu kingdom¹⁸. MacFarlane's letter setting out the original reasons for Langalibalele's request is missing from the records of the Native Affairs department, but from the questions asked of MacFarlane by Scott it is apparent that Langalibalele was objecting to the maltreatment of his people on private farms. The questions seem to point to the fact that these individuals were working for white farmers as well as paying rent.

No decision was apparently arrived at, but it must have been obvious to Langalibalele that his chance of receiving an affirmative answer was very limited. In 1856 Zikhali had requested permission to move following an incident where MacFarlane had harshly treated a group of his supporters¹⁹. Permission was refused and Langalibalele must have been aware of this fact. There was little to be gained from a move out of his location in terms of a better environment. It is not surprising therefore that there is no further reference to this topic in the records, suggesting that Langalibalele did not press the issue any more. By responding to the plight of Hlubi living on private farms, Langalibalele may well have been indicating that he regarded himself as a spokesman for their interests, and that their grievances against the authorities should be taken up through himself. In this manner, Langalibalele may have been trying to affirm his formal authority over these people on privately owned farms. The request seems to have been a bluff, an assertion of his authority in a manoeuvre designed to maintain his power within the new political dispensation in which he and his people found themselves.

For some individuals of the Hlubi and Ngwe colonial rule would have presented them with opportunities for breaking away from the control of chiefs and ruling hierarchies. While there is at this stage no direct

18. SNA 1/3/7, no. 38, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 6 March 1858.
 19. GH 1211, no. 31, Cooper to Labouchere, 12 May 1856.

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18. SNA 1/3/7, no. 38, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 6 March 1858.
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evidence suggesting the attitudes and courses of action which individuals may have adopted, it must be noted that the possibilities for engaging in economic activities outside the chiefs' jurisdiction increased when the Hlubi and Ngwe were subject to colonial authority.

While Langalibalele and Phuthini could actively display their displeasure over the potential undermining of their power in the 1850s, they had to be careful not to antagonise the colonial authorities to the point where the latter would take forceful action against them. There were two recent precedents which would have given the Hlubi and Ngwe an indication of how far they could resist the Government's authority.

In 1857, Chief Sidoyi, of the Hlangwini, who lived south of the Mkhomazi river, attacked a neighbouring group under Mshukangubo. The immediate cause of the attack arose out of a quarrel at a wedding celebration, but there appears to have been previous emnity between the two groups. When summoned by the authorities to account for his behaviour, Sidoyi went into hiding and eventually fled from Natal²⁰. On orders from the Executive Council, the local magistrate seized nearly all of the Hlangwini cattle and destroyed their homes and those of their alleged allies²¹.

Only a few months after this, Chief Matshana of the Sithole, who lived in the Ladysmith district, was charged with complicity in the murder of a supposed witch. Matshana failed to appear before the local magistrate, Dr. Kelly, and Shepstone, acting on his own initiative, sent his brother with a large force to arrest the chief. This African contingent was raised entirely from among the Hlubi, three of whom were killed in an ensuing skirmish with Matshana's men. Matshana himself managed to escape, though 30 of his followers were killed. The rest were ultimately dispersed among

20. Records of Natal Executive Council, EC6, pp.59-61, meeting no.11, 13 April 1857.
21. Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', pp.66-67.

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19. ...

other Africans in Natal and their cattle were "eaten-up"²². From the white farmers' point of view the breaking up of Matshana's people provided an unexpected boon; it bought a "previously dangerous location of Kafirs into the labour market"²³.

Despite the fact that Langalibalele had on this occasion co-operated with the Government, MacFarlane used the Matshana incident as a threat to him. When in 1859 Langalibalele refused to restore confiscated property to one of his followers after MacFarlane had ordered its restoration, the magistrate had only to remind him of what had happened to Matshana and Langalibalele, "expressed great contention (and) earnestly begged that I would not report him to His Excellency"²⁴.

The Sidoyi and Matshana incidents exemplify the way in which the colonial authorities came to intervene increasingly in internal or "domestic" issues within and between groups. They also indicate the way in which Shepstone attempted to expand the scope of his authority in whatever ways he could, provided that it was not costly or dangerous. Administrative interventions in the affairs of the Hlubi and Ngwe became more frequent as they were incorporated into the economic life of the colony. This in turn added to and complicated the leadership difficulties faced by African chiefs.

The colonial authorities intervened a number of times in the affairs of the Hlubi and Ngwe in the late 1850s and early 1860s. In 1857

22. For accounts of this affair see E. Leandy de Bufanos, 'The Matyana affair', (unpublished B.A. Hons. thesis, Natal University, 1965), Chapter I; Welsh, Roots of Segregation pp.121-122, and J. Colenso and Rev. Tonnesen, The History of the Matshana Enquiry (Bishopstowe, 1875).
23. Natal Witness, 5 February 1858.
24. SNA 1/3/8, no. 211, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 31 January 1859.

MacFarlane reprovved Langalibalele for allowing the practice of animal mutilation during ritual ceremonies and warned him not to allow the practice to be repeated²⁵. In 1858 it was widely held by white farmers and officials²⁶ that members of the Hlubi and Ngwe had crossed into Lesotho to join forces with Moshweshwe in his fight against the Orange Free State²⁷. After investigation MacFarlane reported that Langalibalele and Phuthini had assured him that their people were not involved²⁸. Yet MacFarlane's annual report in 1859 makes it clear that he believed that contact had taken place between the Hlubi and Ngwe and the Sotho kingdom:

The intimate connections which exist between the Amahlubi and the Basutos have made Langalibalele familiar with every occurrence of the late war....The result...cannot fail to foster feelings of pride and a craving of independence in the breast of every African chief in Natal. I have no doubt that he [Langalibalele] profits by his knowledge of what took place across the border²⁹.

The *Natal Witness* believed that members of the Hlubi and Ngwe were crossing into Lesotho "to take advantage of the confusion into which the country is thrown, by picking up odd herds of cattle"³⁰. If this was the case the geographical proximity of the Hlubi with the Sotho and their apparent "intimate connections", would have made it difficult for Langalibalele to prevent his followers leaving Natal.

- 25. SNA 1/3/6, no. 97, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 14 March 1857.
- 26. SNA 1/1/8, no. 29, Allison to Shepstone, 3 May 1858.
- 27. The conflict arose after the Sotho refused to move within the boundary drawn between the O.F.S. and Lesotho by Sir George Grey in 1855. L. Thompson "Co-operation and conflict: the high veld", *QUSA*, vol. I, pp.417-432 passim.
- 28. SNA 1/3/7, no. 67, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 7 May 1858.
- 29. SNA 1/3/8, no. 211, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 31 January 1859.
- 30. *Natal Witness*, 14 May 1858.

In January 1859 Langalibalele refused to obey an order from MacFarlane to restore confiscated property to one of his followers and was warned of the danger of insubordination by the magistrate (see above). Thus by the end of January 1859 MacFarlane reported that he "could not speak in favourable terms" of Langalibalele. "It is with the Hlubi", he continued, "owing to the restless disposition of their chief, that we may anticipate the first difficulty, should difficulty unfortunately hereafter arise"³¹. It is obvious then, that the two men had not reached a rapport between the time of MacFarlane's arrival in mid-1855 and 1859. The poor relationship between them made it harder for Langalibalele to form an understanding of his powers as a chief under the colonial Government.

In 1863 and 1864 the administration intervened with a heavy hand in the internal politics of the Ngwe. In April 1863 Phuthini died. His successor, who was not specifically named, was appointed according to the traditional means, but the Government stepped in and prevented the inauguration of the chosen successor³². Shepstone expressly ordered MacFarlane to prohibit the Ngwe from taking any steps to arrange for the succession of a new chief and eventually himself nominated Baso, one of Phuthini's sons, as an interim leader. Baso was summoned to Pietermaritzburg together with some of the elders of the chiefdom, for briefing on his duties as a chief³³. By appointing Baso, Shepstone ensured that he would toe the line, for Baso knew that he held office by virtue of Shepstone's favour. The Ngwe strongly resented the Government's intrusion. Missionary Neizel³⁴ reported that they were "restless and dissatisfied" and said to him:

We have acted rightly. We have observed the customs of our fathers and ancestors. We don't trouble ourselves about the customs of the Europeans, why do they trouble themselves about us³⁵.

31. SNA 1/3/8, no. 211, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 31 January 1859.
 32. SNA 1/3/14, no. 14, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 22 January 1864.
 33. SNA 1/8/8, p.411, p.385, Shepstone to MacFarlane, 14 March 1864.
 34. Neizel was appointed as missionary to the Ngwe in 1863 and established a mission the following year. (see below).
 35. Berliner Missions Berichte, 1864, pp.299-300.

Shepstone's tampering with the customary means of choosing a successor to Phuthini provides a classic case of the way in which he manipulated African groups "in the interests of patronage or security or a combination of both"³⁶. This intervention brought serious disunity within the Ngwe and was to prove devastating for their future.

As chiefs became increasingly subject to the overriding control of the Native Affairs Department, and as the complexities of government multiplied, it would seem natural that they would seek assistance from any quarter which might aid them in the task of managing their people and communicating with the colonial authorities. This would explain why Langalibalele and Phuthini eventually agreed in 1864 to the establishment of mission stations among their people.

The general response of Africans in Natal to the arrival of missionaries among them was initially one of curiosity which gave way to indifference and, occasionally, hostility³⁷. As a general rule chiefs "showed a continuing interest in using missionaries as technologists and as intermediaries in relations with white officials"³⁸. Missionaries were often asked to perform administrative functions such as the provision of letters of introduction, the certification of death or in giving assistance in the purchase of land by Africans. African Christian converts (Kholwa) were generally shunned and if they lived outside the confines of a mission station they were "taunted and ridiculed in the hope that they would retreat again into isolation"³⁹.

Unconverted Africans in Natal were particularly worried by the attempts of missionaries to abolish polygamy and *lobolo*. Some missionaries (Colenso particularly) realised that *lobolo* was more than simply a purchasing agreement, but, according to Etherington, "none made an effort to understand the full ramifications of the system"⁴⁰.

36. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.119.
Welsh provides a number of examples of how Shepstone appointed chiefs for this purpose. pp.118-120.
37. Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', pp.137-176, passim.
38. *Ibid.*, p.137.
39. *Ibid.*, p.171.
40. *Ibid.*, p.163.

[Faint, mostly illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. Some words like "Shepstone", "chiefs", and "missionaries" are faintly visible.]

Missionaries as a whole tended to oppose the administration's policy in regard to Africans. The Government recognised that polygamy was a system so strongly linked to African laws and customs in Natal that it could not be removed without violent repercussions. Most missionaries, on the other hand, were convinced that the practice of polygamy had to be removed in order to admit Africans to the Church, though there were differences among them as to how polygamy was to be broken down. Thus some supported the settlers in their attempts to subvert the locations policy because they believed that locations "encapsulated Africans in a pagan environment"⁴¹, while others (particularly the Americans) were fearful of any measures which would break up the locations and leave landless Africans at the mercy of the settlers⁴².

Langalibalele and Phuthini had made tenuous contact with missionaries as far back as the 1840s when Allison established missionary "outposts" with their people in the Zulu kingdom⁴³. Langalibalele was aware at an early stage of his life in Natal of the assistance which a missionary could render him. In 1853 he told Colenso that "we came here to save our lives from our enemies, and now we wish to know what our protectors know"⁴⁴. He also realised that he could have closer contact with the ruling power if he had an English missionary nearby, and for this reason he initially rebuffed the German missionaries who attempted to establish a mission among the Hlubi in the late 1850s⁴⁵. Only after overtures to the American Congregationalists and Anglicans in 1862 proved ineffective⁴⁶, did Langalibalele agree to the establishment of a mission station (Emphangweni) under the Hermannsburg Missionary Society (H.M.S.)

41. Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.44.
 42. L.E. Switzer, 'The problems of an African Mission in a white-dominated, multi-racial society: the American Zulu Mission in South Africa 1885-1910', (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Natal, 1971), pp.21-22; D.P. Collins, 'The origins and the formation of the Zulu Congregational Church, 1896-1908', (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Natal, 1978), pp.33-35.
 43. James Stuart Collection, File 59, nbk. 29, p.50, evidence of Mabhonsa.
 44. N.A. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, vol. I (1978), citing J.W. Colenso, *Church missions among the Heathen in the Diocese of Natal* (London n.d.), p.8.
 45. Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', pp.143-144.
 46. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.18.

in 1864. The station took its name from Langalibalele's homestead of the same name, from which it was two or three miles distant.

In June 1864 the Berlin Missionary Society (B.M.S.) founded a station among the Ngwe. The station was run by a man named Neizel who received a friendly reception from Baso⁴⁷. This mission station was actually an off-shoot from the mission station at Emmaus (with the Ngwane) and missionaries had been in contact with the Ngwe from 1851. As has been mentioned the Ngwe were not slow in attempting to get Neizel to intercede with the administration on their behalf following Shepstone's interference in their affairs after Phuthini's death. The welcome given to Neizel by Baso can possibly be seen as an attempt by him to boost his uncertain position as leader of the Ngwe following Phuthini's death.

By the time of the arrival of the missionaries in the mid-1860s, the participation of numbers of Hlubi and Ngwe in the colony's economic life was increasing as they expanded their agricultural production for the market. The emergence of a "proto-peasantry" among the Hlubi and Ngwe has been noted as beginning from the early 1850s. As has been stressed in chapter III, all African household heads had to find ways of paying their taxes or rents. It seems that up to about 1860 the Hlubi and Ngwe followed two courses of action - either to sell cattle or agricultural surplus such as grain or vegetables, or to seek employment with the whites. After about 1860 however, there appears to have been an increasing tendency towards peasant production. It is necessary to consider the reasons for this shift towards greater agricultural activity among the Hlubi and Ngwe in the early 1860s.

The first reason had its origins in the activities of white land speculators in Natal. By 1860 most areas of Natal were concentrated in the hands of a few speculators. In the early 1860s the leading fifteen

47. Missionsberichte, 1864, p.292. This station was called Emangweni.

white speculators in Natal controlled between them 700,000 acres⁴⁸. This trend towards the accumulation of large areas of the colony in the hands of a few individual whites was a cause of concern to the administration. It reduced the amount of land open to the colonists who hoped to farm commercially, causing them to pressure the administration to release for white occupation land held by Africans in Natal. In 1861 Lieutenant-Governor Scott proposed a system of tribal titles which would give Africans ownership and control of land, "beyond the reach of the Colonists' designs"⁴⁹. Thus despite the demands of some colonists in the Legislative Council for a revision of "Native Policy", Scott refused to make any alteration to the system of land-holding by Africans on the grounds that it would be a breach of faith. The result was that the prospects for a plentiful and cheap supply of labour diminished. This chronic shortage of labour is best illustrated by the Government's decision to import indentured Indian labour in 1860 to work on the Sugar Cane plantations⁵⁰. The decision of many of the white landowners to rent their lands to Africans rather than sell them to the colonists at the cheap prices the settlers wanted, also reduced the amount of land and labour available for white farmers. Under these conditions it seems that many settlers turned their attentions away from active farming.

At the same time those white farmers who did remain on the land tended to specialise their farming operations and concentrated on saleable commodities for export. The most obvious case is the Sugar Industry. Between 1858 and 1864 the value of sugar exported from the plantations on the Natal coast quadrupled⁵¹. In northern Natal and the Midlands, farmers after 1856-57 turned increasingly to sheep farming. There were essentially two reasons for this; firstly the crippling losses sustained as a result of the lung-sickness epidemic encouraged the accumulation of flocks of sheep⁵², and secondly farmers had been influenced by the success of sheep

48. Slater, 'Land, labour and capital' in Natal', p.262.
 49. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.39.
 50. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, p.85.
 51. Ibid., p.80.
 52. Natal Witness, 9 October 1856.

farmers in the O.F.S. and were able to fairly easily import their stocks from across the border⁵³. Between 1855 and 1862 the number of sheep in Natal increased from 10,000 to 122,425⁵⁴, and Blue Book returns reveal that Weenen county farmers owned 59,079 sheep in 1862 as opposed to 8,000 in 1856. On the other hand the number of cattle owned by Weenen farmers remained fairly static during the years 1858-1864⁵⁵. These figures suggest the extent to which farmers in Weenen district concentrated on wool production for export. This kind of specialised farming meant that there was a gap in the production of foodstuffs for immediate consumption by whites. It was into this gap that the African farmer, possessing the advantages of family labour and plentiful land, was able to step.

A number of additional factors gave impetus to peasant production among the Hlubi and Ngwe. When missionaries applied for the establishment of stations among Africans they also applied for substantial grants of land on which their supporters could live. The H.M.S. acquired a relatively small area of 100 acres at Emphangweni but by the mid-1860s this land was occupied by 90 members of the Hlubi who adopted European agricultural practices⁵⁶. At Emangweni some members of the Ngwe were farming plots on a larger area of land (500 acres) which had been granted to the B.M.S.⁵⁷. At Emmaus (the B.M.S. station with the Ngwane) the African residents were selling cattle to buy ploughs, and were growing wheat and fruit and trading dry fruit and timber across the Drakensberg⁵⁸. Neizel encouraged similar practices at the Emangweni. Although peasant production on these mission stations was undoubtedly fairly modest compared to output on the larger mission reserves along the Natal coast, they probably acted as a catalyst for the adoption of European agricultural practices among the Hlubi and Ngwe as a whole⁵⁹, thus slowly increasing agricultural output among them.

53. B.J. Leverton, 'Government finance and political development in Natal, 1843 to 1896', Archives Year Book for S.A. History, vol I, 1970, p.99.
 54. Leverton, 'Government finance', p.84.
 55. Natal Blue Books 1856-1864, Agriculture.
 56. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.19; Natal Blue Books, 1865, Ecclesiastical Returns.
 57. Missionsberichte, 1872, p.425.
 58. SNA 1/1/6, no. 145, Zunckel to Shepstone, 3 January 1856.
 59. M. Wilson, 'The growth of peasant communities', OHSA, vol. II, p.49. Wilson has noted the role of mission stations particularly as agents of peasantisation.

white agriculture in Natal... This trend towards the accumulation of large areas of the country in the hands of a few individuals... It reduced the amount of land open to the colonists... who hoped to farm commercially... administration to release for white occupation land held by Africans... In Natal... tribal rights which would give Africans ownership and control of land... beyond the reach of the Colonists' domain... at some colonies in the legislative council for a revision of 'Native Affairs'... being by Africans on the grounds that it would be a breach of faith... the results was that the prospects for a plentiful and cheap supply of labour diminished... by the Government's decision to import indentured Indian labour in 1850... the white landowners to rent their lands to Africans rather than sell them to the colonists... reduced the amount of land and labour available for white farmers... Under these conditions it seems that many settlers turned their attention away from active farming.

At the same time those white farmers who did remain on the land tended to specialise their farming operations and concentrated on export commodities for export. The most obvious case is the sugar industry... the value of sugar exported from the plantations on the Natal coast quadrupled... (1855-7) turned increasingly to sheep farming. There were essentially two reasons for this: firstly the competing income sustained by a trend of the large-scale white encouraged the accumulation of flocks of sheep... and secondly farmers had been influenced by the success of sheep

53. B.J. Leverton, 'Government finance and political development in Natal, 1843 to 1896', Archives Year Book for S.A. History, vol I, 1970, p.99.
 54. Leverton, 'Government finance', p.84.
 55. Natal Blue Books 1856-1864, Agriculture.
 56. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.19; Natal Blue Books, 1865, Ecclesiastical Returns.
 57. Missionsberichte, 1872, p.425.
 58. SNA 1/1/6, no. 145, Zunckel to Shepstone, 3 January 1856.
 59. M. Wilson, 'The growth of peasant communities', OHSA, vol. II, p.49. Wilson has noted the role of mission stations particularly as agents of peasantisation.

One of the biggest obstacles to peasant farming among the Hlubi and Ngwe in the 1850s was the lack of a market. However as the white population of the northern districts grew⁶⁰ and small white communities settled at Estcourt⁶¹ and Ladysmith, a market for African-grown foodstuffs developed. In addition the "over-Berg" route which passed through Estcourt, only half a day's wagon ride away from the Hlubi location, would have increased demand for food in these centres. There was therefore the development of a small but growing and stable market in the vicinity of the Hlubi and Ngwe, where they could, particularly if they were able to purchase wagons, transport and sell their produce.

Several reports testify to the growing success of African peasants in Natal; particularly their ability to compete with whites in the market. Consideration will now be given to these Africans and then to the Hlubi and Ngwe in particular.

In 1859 the *Natal Witness* reported that:

Every man is prepared to hire his neighbours Kafirs, and give six, seven, eight, nine, ten shillings per month, where he used to pay five, ... The raw Kafir has passed through the school of industrial training, and if not paid what he demands, can get credit for wagon and oxen, go on his own account, and throw his labour onto the market, in a new, but not sufficiently appreciated, form⁶².

In 1861 the same newspaper commented in an editorial that:

The natives, who are very susceptible to monetary motives, appears (sic) to produce more than usual and many appear to have thrown aside the pick for the plough⁶³.

60. In 1865, the first year in which figures are available, there were 553 whites in the Klip river district and 430 in the Weenen district; *Natal Blue Book 1865*, Population.
 61. *NBB*, vol. 10, 1859, p.109; The Magistracy moved from Weenen to Estcourt in 1859 as recognition of its growing size and importance in the Weenen division.
 62. *Natal Witness*, 20 May 1859.
 63. *Natal Witness*, 1 November 1861.

...the number of additional labourers have tended to increase production among the Hlubi and Ngwe. When established applied for the establishment of stations among Africans they also applied for substantial grants of land on which their supporters could live. The B.N.S. acquired a relatively small area of 100 acres as a reward for the mid-1850s. This land was occupied by 30 members of the Hlubi who adopted European agricultural practices. At the same time some members of the Hlubi were taking plots on a larger area of land (500 acres) which had been granted to the B.N.S. At the same time the B.N.S. station with the Hlubi the African residents were selling cattle to buy ploughs and were growing wheat and other crops. The Hlubi and other members of the Hlubi were encouraged to sell their produce at the station. Although peasant production in these stations was undoubtedly fairly modest compared to output on the larger estates, it was a step towards the Hlubi and Ngwe. They probably acted as a catalyst for the adoption of European agricultural practices among the Hlubi and Ngwe as a whole. Thus slowly increasing agricultural output would lead to a more stable and prosperous life for the Hlubi and Ngwe.

21. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.
 22. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.
 23. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.
 24. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.
 25. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.
 26. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.
 27. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.
 28. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.
 29. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.
 30. *Government of Natal*, *Annual Report for 1865*, Natal, 1866, p. 109.

By about 1863 the *Natal Witness* was talking about a "class of (Black) colonists" who were engaged in full-time trading. These people would:

convey from one part of the colony to another, and often beyond our boundaries, loads amounting to thousands of pounds. They will trade with neighbouring tribes, and will receive goods from shop-keepers for that purpose, giving their promissory notes for the value, which notes will be endorsed by one or more of their friends, and will be discounted at the Natal Bank⁶⁴.

In July of the same year the *Witness* again referred to the judicious (African) trader who would "carry merchandise into regions that the white man would not think it worth his while to traverse"⁶⁵. These entrepreneurs accelerated the process by which the rural economies of the locations were linked with the colonial market economy. They eased the problems of transportation which had long been a hindrance to peasant producers.

Bundy has noted the increase in African agricultural production in Natal from the late 1850s and early 1860s. The increase in production and sales was so great "that in many areas the local population produced sufficient surplus grain to support white villages (as well as many individual white graziers)"⁶⁶. Etherington's research has also revealed that the trading activities conducted by *Kholwa* Africans at Emmaus and Emangweni were common at other mission stations in the early 1860s⁶⁷. Thus if one is to attempt to date the "take-off" period for African agriculture in Natal it would fall into the late 1850s and early 1860s.

64. *Natal Witness*, 9 January 1863.
65. *Natal Witness*, 17 July 1863.
66. Bundy, 'African Peasants', pp.234-235.
67. Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', p.248.

Apart from the beginnings of peasant production at the mission stations at Emphangweni and Emangweni there are several indications that the non-Christian members of the Hlubi and Ngwe specifically were selling agricultural surplus. In 1858 there was an instance of a white man, G. Rudolph, entering Phuthini's location to buy mealies from the Africans⁶⁸. In 1859 MacFarlane noted that the Hlubi were "daily acquiring horses in considerable numbers" which was enabling the men to travel longer distances than they had previously⁶⁹. This would have allowed the Hlubi to observe more easily the possibilities for making money through the sale of agricultural surplus. Etherington, basing his evidence on the records of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society, asserts that the Hlubi followed the "example set on mission stations" and were using "new agricultural techniques to increase food supplies". Although Etherington is not specific it appears that the use of ploughs among the Hlubi was beginning in the first half of the 1860s⁷⁰.

That the number of peasant producers in the Weenen district was increasing at this time is illustrated by information furnished by MacFarlane in 1862. There were at this time 121 white-owned farms in the Weenen district, of which 55 were not occupied by the proprietors or their agents. MacFarlane reported that there were 2,337 African male adults (over 15 years of age) living on these 55 farms together with their families. The greatest number of male adults on one farm was 96⁷¹. Presuming that these people were paying rent to the white owners it can be assumed that the most obvious means of raising such a rent would have been through the sale of agricultural surplus. Thus there is some evidence to suggest that the Hlubi and Ngwe were similar to other African groups in Natal in that they could meet the cash requirements of the state or of private individuals by the production and sale of foodstuffs or cattle.

68. SNA 1/1/8, no. 29, J. Allison to Shepstone, 3 May 1858.
 69. SNA 1/3/8, no. 211, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 31 January 1859.
 70. Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', pp.252-253.
 71. SNA 1/3/11, no. 99, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 30 June 1862.
 Return of queries regarding locations.

Not only were some individuals of the Hlubi and Ngwe moving away from the locations to work for wages with white people; some were also moving onto the farms of whites where they lived outside the chiefs' control. It is important to make the distinction that while many Africans were forced out of the locations through the necessity to make money, others might have willingly left the locations. Although there is no direct evidence to prove it, it is probable that some men, particularly young men having to pay tribute to their chiefs, were deliberately placing themselves outside the confines of chiefly control. Whatever the reasons, the departure of people from the Hlubi and Ngwe locations appeared to be on the increase during this period and was undoubtedly a source of concern to the leaders of these groups. As the economic activities of individuals diversified as they were linked into the colonial economy, it would appear that chiefs were displaced in many of their economic roles⁷². For example whites or African entrepreneurs may have been trading with individuals of the Hlubi and Ngwe and not directly with their chiefs. Although there are no specific records available during this period which throw light on the position of the Hlubi and Ngwe it seems probable that the leaders were beginning to experience problems of control among their people.

During these years Hlubi and Ngwe affairs became more and more interwoven with those of other groups in Natal. This brought them into more direct competition with the white settlers. As the Hlubi and Ngwe became further involved in the wider society so this state of competitiveness became more acute. This will be the theme of the next chapter.

72. This displacement has been observed in Pondo society. W. Beinart, 'Economic change in Pondoland in the nineteenth century', I.C.S. Collected Seminar Papers on 'The Societies of Southern Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries', 1975, pp.10-11.

CHAPTER FIVE

EXPANSION IN THE WIDER WORLD, 1865 - 1873

The Hlubi and Ngwe became increasingly involved in the economic affairs of southern Africa between 1865 and 1873. In many respects the problems caused by this, and noted in the previous chapter, became more marked. The reasons for this growing involvement were largely shaped by economic changes in Natal and South Africa as a whole. These developments, which are discussed below, had important economic and social repercussions for the Hlubi and Ngwe.

The economic position of whites in Natal during this period (1865 - 1873), was initially precarious owing to a decline between 1865 and 1869. This "depression" had its roots in the early 1860s when Natalians had over-specified and had borrowed heavily. The concentration on sugar and wool production by the colonists had created a "lop-sided" economy. The emphasis on sugar and wool production also meant that goods which could have been manufactured locally were imported¹. Keate described these years as having an air of "unreality and fictitiousness" about them that is important to understand when one considers the bankruptcy of the late 1860s.²

The extravagant speculation of the early 1860s created a shortage of capital by the late 1860s. It became impossible to raise loans in Natal and there was no money available for land purchases. Immigration dwindled so that by 1868 more whites left the colony than entered it, this in turn reducing demand internally.³

1. Leverton, 'Government finance', p.99; Le Cordeur, 'Relations between the Cape and Natal', p.170.
2. GH 1216, no. 133, Keate to Secretary of State, 9 December 1868.
3. Leverton, 'Government finance', pp.96-103.

While the sugar industry was not adversely affected by the "depression", it severely hit the wool farmers of northern Natal. In 1865 there had been a poor year owing to an outbreak of "blue-tongue" among flocks. One Weenen farmer claimed to have lost 280 sheep out of a total of 739 from this disease⁴. In 1868 there was a dramatic fall in the price of wool and the "future prospects for sheep farming looked so grim that stockmen were prepared to sell their flocks at a loss"⁵. The concentration on wool production meant that the sheep farmer "had thus no means to re-coup his losses by diverting his interests"⁶.

At the end of 1868 financial conditions were so depressed that Natal farmers were convening meetings to discuss possible migration out of Natal (Montevideo was suggested as a better alternative!). Even a most casual glance at Natal newspapers between 1865 and 1871 would lead to the realisation that white farmers were fighting for economic survival. As late as June 1871 the *Witness* was still running despairing editorials with headlines such as "A colony to let".

The discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West in 1867 led to an economic recovery in the late 1860s. There was an increased demand at the diamond fields for Natal sugar and coastal-grown coffee. The volume of goods passing through Natal from the interior increased, and in 1871 the O.F.S. contributed £20,000 to the Natal revenue in the form of Customs dues. Loans became easier to obtain⁷.

The quickening economic tempo caused by the discovery of diamonds and the consequent concentration of population in Griqualand West also created increased opportunities for farmers (Black or white) who were capable of producing foodstuffs for the diggers and their

4. J.M. Sellers, 'The origin and development of the Merino sheep industry in the Natal Midlands, 1856-1866', (unpublished M.A. thesis, Natal University, 1946), p.50.
 5. Ibid. p.50; *Natal Mercury* 25 January 1863.
 6. Leverton, 'Government finance', p.101.
 7. Ibid. pp.127-128.

The following year Lieutenant-Governor Keate noted the challenge presented to white farmers by African agricultural producers. He wrote in 1870 that the

... natives of Natal inhabiting the locations....are in fact land-holders, although under a peculiar tenure. As such they are producers, in which they compete with the colonists. The habits of industry they are gradually contracting make this competition year by year more serious¹⁷.

The extent of this competition is suggested by a comparison of the areas reported to be under cultivation by Blacks and whites in Natal. In 1870 there were an estimated 121,499 acres under cultivation in the locations alone¹⁸, while in 1871 there were 140,000 acres (including the sugar plantations) under white cultivation¹⁹.

In 1871 the *Witness* continued to lament the unhappy situation of the white farmer:

The pick is being thrown aside and the plough is coming into use among the coloured colonists. The eager demand for Kafir labor, has led, as was expected, to the training of natives who find little difficulty in entering into competition with their instructors²⁰.

The writer went on to exhort white farmers to change to export crops and to leave "mealie growing, at half-a-crown a muid, to old Kafir women"²¹. The newspaper noted approvingly a few months later that white farmers in the midland districts were diversifying their crops in the face of African competition:

17. G.G. vol. XXII, no. 1269, L.C. no. 5, Keate to Kimberley, 24 October 1870.
18. G.H. vol. 1217, no. 59, Keate to Secretary of State, 8 August 1870.
19. Leverton, 'Government Finance', p.101.
20. *Natal Witness*, 21 March 1871.
21. *Ibid.*

It is found...that the natives are throwing aside the old woman's pick, hiring arable land, and putting large fields under cultivation. This class of farmer naturally turns to potato and mealie planting, and hence the expediency of our more intelligent agriculturists devoting themselves to the cultivation of other crops²².

While this diversification might indeed have been "expedient" it also suggests that white farmers in this part of the country could not match African agriculturists in the production of foodstuffs for the local market.

Such evidence contradicts many previously held views. Welsh has asserted that:

Competition between white and African producers in Natal was never the major political issue that it was to be in northern Rhodesia, Kenya and elsewhere. The records reveal only occasional references to it²³.

He then suggests that the labour question was "incomparably more important". Such an assessment suffers from two misconceptions. Firstly, as Bundy has noted, it "loses sight of the very direct relationship between the 'labour question' and the ability of African producers to compete effectively with white farmers"²⁴. Secondly contemporary records reveal more than just "occasional references" on the part of white farmers to the competition offered by groups of African peasant farmers. Thompson has similarly underestimated the extent to which Africans sold their agricultural output, affirming that the "peasant in the locations... produced very little for sale to white people or for export"²⁵.

22. Natal Witness, 23 June 1871.
23. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.182.
24. Bundy, 'African Peasants', p.244.
25. Thompson, 'The Zulu kingdom and Natal', p.390.

There can be no doubt that the discovery of diamonds intensified competition between white and Black farmers. In the late 1860s white farmers renewed their efforts to obtain African labour as the possibilities of growing foodstuffs for an expanding market became a profitable enterprise. Consequently these farmers again called on Shepstone to reform the location system.

This pressure on the administration to alter the locations policy seems to have come from most white farmers in Natal. It included the sugar farmers who found themselves faced with a shortage of labour in the late 1860s. This was due to the cessation of the importation of indentured Indian labour. The American Civil War (1861-1865) had disrupted the flow of British capital to America, causing British investors to seek new areas for investment. Natal had been one of the (minor) beneficiaries of this re-direction of British investment and sugar farmers used the loans to finance the immigration of Indian labour. However the termination of the Civil War prompted British investors and banking houses to invest once again in the American cotton plantations. As capital was withdrawn, many sugar farmers, dependent on these loans to support the cost of Indian immigration, became insolvent²⁶.

In addition the re-introduction of indentures was "delayed by the British Indian Government until investigation into the alleged maltreatment of Indians by the white settlers had been carried out to their satisfaction"²⁷. Indian emigration ceased from 1865 to 1874, and the sugar farmers began to experience a labour shortage by the late 1860s.

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- 26. M.F. Britensky, 'The economic development of Natal, 1843-8', (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, London University, 1955), pp.217-240 passim.
 - 27. C. Ballard, 'Migrant labour in Natal 1860-1879; with special reference to Zululand and the Delagoa Bay Hinterland', Journal of Natal and Zulu History, vol. 1 (1978), p.30.

Consequently pressure mounted against the administration towards the end of the 1860s as all categories of white farmers in Natal sought African labour. In 1869 the Legislative Council attempted to pass a Bill for the amalgamation of the offices of Colonial Secretary and the Secretary of Native Affairs²⁸. The purpose of this Bill was quite patently to "supply with certainty and at a cheap rate the manual labour required by the Colonists"²⁹. One of the movers of the Bill was Walter MacFarlane, Speaker in the Council, a Weenen country farmer and brother of the magistrate of Weenen district. Shepstone was criticised by the *Times of Natal*, which argued that the "Shepstonian native policy and the progress of the colony are as diametrically opposed as are the poles"³⁰. The farmers' interests also found support from R.E. Ridley, a member of the Council, and editor of the *Witness*, who attacked Shepstone in his editorials for all aspects of 'Native' policy.

However Etherington has shown that Shepstone actively attempted to organise the labour market in a way that would benefit both the large capitalist investors and the "small" farmer. He directed his magistrates to make great effort to obtain labour from Africans at harvest time and in May 1873 he drafted legislation to force Africans remaining in Pietermaritzburg for over five days to accept any work offered to them³¹. In 1869 he drew up a plan to import Tsonga labour from between Delagoa Bay and northern Zululand and he supported the hiring of labour from East Griqualand by recruitment organisations³². By the early 1870s the colonists were largely reliant for their regular labour supplies on the estimated fifteen to twenty thousand "foreign" Africans who had entered the colony since the mid-1860s³³. These immigrants were not enough to meet the

28. W.R. Guest, *Langalibalele: The crisis in Natal 1873-1875*, (Research monograph, no. 2, University of Natal, 1967), p.21.
 29. G.H. 1217, no. 93, Keate to Granville, 22 October 1869.
 30. *Times of Natal*, 1 October 1870.
 31. N.A. Etherington, 'Labour supply and the genesis of South African confederation in the 1870s', *Journal of African History*, vol. 20 (1979), pp.237-239.
 32. Ballard, 'Migrant Labour', pp.31-35; SNA 1/1/19, no. 40, Keate to Goodcliffe, Smart, Ballance and Co., 31 July 1869.

seemingly unending demand for African labour among the farmers of Natal. The colonists' criticisms of Shepstone's policy stemmed from the fact that he was not radical enough in his attempts to coerce Africans into the labour market.

It is now appropriate to discuss the position of the Hlubi and Ngwe specifically in the changing conditions of the late 1860s and early 1870s. There are abundant references among contemporary sources noting the "wealth" of the Hlubi³⁴. Although usually unaccompanied by any factual information such impressionistic views do give a clue to the kind of developments taking place in the Hlubi and Ngwe chiefdoms. There are also details of a more factual nature which suggest that the Hlubi were a wealthy chiefdom by the end of the 1860s.

Returns from Natal Blue Books between 1867 and 1872 show a great increase in the number of cattle owned by location dwellers in the Weenen district. In 1870 these Africans possessed 51,478 head, in 1871, 65,492 head and in 1872, 70,998 head. In 1866 Africans in the magisterial district of Weenen were the third largest group of stock-owners in Natal, only the magisterial districts of Klip River and Pietermaritzburg possessing greater numbers of African stock-owners³⁵. By 1871 however Africans in the Weenen district possessed more cattle than those Africans in the Klip River or Pietermaritzburg areas.

There are two obvious difficulties in trying to draw conclusions from these figures. Firstly, it is possible that there was an improvement in the method of counting cattle between 1867 and 1872. Secondly it is difficult to establish what proportion of the location Africans of the Weenen magistracy were members of the Hlubi and Ngwe. Colenso estimated, in 1872, that the Hlubi and Ngwe comprised from a third to a half of all location dwellers in the Weenen magistracy³⁶.

33. Cited in Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.181, from SNA 1/7/8, T. Shepstone, memorandum, 18 December, 1871.
34. See for example, BPP C-1141, Anon., Introduction to the Trial of Chief Langalibalele, p.59.
35. Natal Blue Books, Statistical Returns 1866-1872, Agriculture. BPP C-1141, Langalibalele and the Amahlubi Tribe, p.13, Colenso's figures are drawn from Perrins Register, 1871-73, which lists the number of huts in the location of those groups in the Weenen district.

It can be very roughly calculated that in 1872 the Hlubi and Ngwe possessed, between them, from 20 to 25 thousand head of cattle in their locations. This figure would seem to tally with Hansen's estimation, made in 1873, that the Hlubi in their location owned 15,000 head of cattle³⁷. The crucial fact concerning these figures is that they suggest that there was a substantial increase in the number of cattle possessed by the Hlubi and Ngwe during the period under consideration.

Africans in the northern area of Natal did not attempt to keep sheep in any great numbers and were unaffected by sheep diseases or the fall in the price of wool. The Hlubi and Ngwe, as owners of large herds, would have been more favourably placed than their white neighbours to provide cattle for the Griqualand West market.

Evidence strongly suggests that Africans in Natal, from at least the late 1850s, were trading across Natal's borders whenever such activities were likely to prove lucrative. A white commentator observed that in about 1859 or 1860, when lung-sickness was still prevalent at the Cape, "the Cape butchers and dealers...purchase beasts [from Africans] in the Klip River and Weenen divisions at high prices for their own markets"³⁸. During the wars between the O.F.S. and the Sotho (1865-1868) Natal Africans were selling horses and mealies, at five or six times their usual price, to the Boers³⁹. The Hlubi and Ngwe would have been geographically well placed to conduct such trade. Similarly after the discovery of diamonds in 1867 the Hlubi and Ngwe, from their position in the north-west of Natal, could have sold their produce, either directly or through middlemen, at the diggings where "business was brisk and money plentiful"⁴⁰. Moreover the proximity of the route from

37. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.9.
38. R.J. Mann, The Colony of Natal (London n. d.), pp.114-115.
39. Natal Witness, 9 April 1868.
40. Natal Witness, 12 December 1871.

southern Natal to the diamond fields enabled African groups under the Drakensberg to sell agricultural produce to travellers en route to Griqualand West. A traveller to the fields in 1870 wrote of how Africans approached his wagons with "chickens, pumpkins, marrows and milk for sale" after his party had crossed the Bushman's River near Estcourt⁴¹. In 1871 the Estcourt correspondent for the *Witness* reported that:

Wagons are now passing en masse. The veldt is getting very good and trade in this village keeps the three stores continually at it. Mealies fetch.... 7 shs. 6d. to 8 shillings a muid⁴².

In 1872 W.A. Illing, missionary of a station near Ladysmith reported that "the merchants buy all the mealies in from the Kafirs to the end that they may convey it to the diamond fields where they get a high price for it"⁴³.

The importance of the proximity of the "overberg" route, allowing the Hlubi and Ngwe easy access to a ready market, must be emphasised. It was a stimulus to the production of a saleable agricultural surplus particularly in northern Natal, and quite possibly a market for the sale of cattle. The capacity of the Hlubi and Ngwe to produce for this market would have been enhanced by the excellent harvest of 1870⁴⁴ and the harvest of 1873, the "best the Hlubi had ever experienced"⁴⁵.

41. J.W. Matthews, Incwadi Yami, or Twenty Years Personal Experience in South Africa (Johannesburg 1876). pp.57-58.
 42. *Natal Witness*, 24 October 1871.
 43. Cited in Bundy, 'African Peasants', p.239, from Archives for the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel.
 44. *Natal Witness*, 1 July 1870.
 45. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.9.

There can be no doubt that peasant agriculture among the Hlubi and Ngwe burgeoned from about 1867 or 1868. Possibly the clearest proof of this is in Hansen's observation, made in 1873, that the Hlubi "had substituted the plough for the hoe in three quarters of all their cultivated fields"⁴⁶. The increased use of ploughs was, in Etherington's view, to increase production and thus "lessen the insecurity of life on the land". However, it also seems that this substitution was made with a view to producing an agricultural surplus for sale.

If the opening of the diamond fields presented increased opportunities for peasant producers, it presented new opportunities also for individual Hlubi and Ngwe to leave their homes to seek work on the diggings. Those men who went to work in Griqualand West did so for a number of possible reasons. Either they considered the relatively high wages offered at the diggings a better alternative than peasant production, or they welcomed the chance of gaining money fairly quickly with which they could attempt to establish independent homesteads once they returned to Natal. It is likely that young men could get rich, marry younger and thereby slowly detach themselves from chiefly authority. The ease with which guns could be obtained at the diggings was an additional incentive to some men to work there⁴⁷. Thus groups of younger men undoubtedly saw distinct advantages in voluntarily selling their labour to whites at the diggings.

Wages at the diamond fields were two or three times higher than in Natal. In 1871-72 the average wage at the diggings was between 5 s, and 7s 6d a week, and by 1872-73 wages had increased to between 7s 6d and 15s a week⁴⁸. Moreover the demand for "Zulu" workers was high. ("Zulu" was the term applied to Natal Africans; labour migration from the Zulu kingdom to the fields was virtually non-existent)⁴⁹. From the diggers

46. Ibid.
 47. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.114. The question of guns will be given fuller treatment in Ch. VI.
 48. R.F. Siebörger, 'The recruitment and organisation of African labour for the Kimberley diamond mines 1871-1888', (unpublished M.A. Thesis, Rhodes University, 1975), p.18.
 49. J.R. Poole, 'Cetewayo's story of the Zulu nation and the war', *MacMillan's Magazine*, February 1880, pp.290-291 + n.

point of view:

....the Zulu held pride of place. Their physique and honesty were universally acclaimed, and, because their numbers were small, demand for them was always high⁵⁰.

From a Return of "New and Old Hands" (a register of Africans newly employed at the fields and those leaving employment) Sieborger has concluded that a significant number of Hlubi left the diggings in 1873-1874⁵¹. It is highly probable that these men had been employed from the early 1870s. Early in 1873 the Resident magistrate at Leribe in Basutoland informed the acting magistrate in Estcourt that large numbers of Hlubi men had been observed travelling to the diamond fields. He complained that the majority of these men were travelling to the diggings either without passes from the authorities in Natal or with obviously forged passes⁵². From such reports it appears that the number of Hlubi and Ngwe at the diamond fields, was, by the middle of 1873, fairly considerable.

The higher wages in Griqualand West in turn pushed up wages in Natal (although there was never anything approaching parity) and Africans in Natal in many cases refused, in the early 1870s, to work for less than 15s a month⁵³. At the beginning of 1873 Shepstone instructed the Surveyor-General to push up wages for employment on Government works from 15s to 20s a month in order to make them competitive both with those wages paid at the diamond fields, and wages paid by the colonists to their Black employees⁵⁴. Wage labourers in Natal consequently benefitted from

50. Sieborger, "Recruitment and organisation of African labour", p.16.
51. Ibid., p.12. The reasons for their departure will be discussed in the next Chapter.
52. SNA 1/3/23, pp.649-656, Mellersh to Shepstone, 14 February 1873.
53. Natal Witness, 20 October 1871.
54. SNA 1/8/10, p.212, Shepstone to Surveyor-General, 24 March 1873.

the discovery of diamonds. With young men travelling to and from the diggings from about 1868 the Hlubi and Ngwe were probably fairly familiar with relative wages and market trends, and would have known the most favourable conditions under which to sell their labour.

There is evidence to suggest that the white farmers in Weenen district resented the competition posed by African peasant producers in their neighbourhood. They also resented the fact that they could not obtain enough labourers among the local Africans.

In 1871 the *Witness* reported that a group of white men (non-farmers) in the Estcourt district were "accosting" Sotho as they entered Natal. The reasons why Sotho may have been entering Natal at this time are not clear. However, according to Shepstone, many Sotho had crossed into Natal during the Sotho-Boer wars of the late 1860s to obtain food and employment⁵⁵ and possibly groups of Sotho were still travelling to Natal to seek work in the early 1870s. These Sotho were being "accosted" by this group of whites and allotted out to white farmers in the district for a fee or 10 or 15 shillings⁵⁶. It appears from this report that whites in the district were so short of labour that they had to resort to this form of "press-ganged" labour.

Farmers in the immediate vicinity of the Hlubi and Ngwe locations complained, in 1872, of the shortage of labour with a vehemence that equalled or exceeded that expressed by whites in other parts of Natal. At a meeting called in Estcourt to discuss the labour problem a prominent farmer from Bushman's River, J.B. Wilkes, told the assembly of farmers:

You are aware, as employers of labor, of the great difficulty in obtaining it.... There is a native policy in this country opposed to labor. In fact in the locations, and in various other places (Crown-lands) these natives have plenty of land and large flocks, and they are independent of labor.

55. G.M. Theal, (ed), *Basutoland Records* ^{vol. 3} (Cape Town, 1883), p.804, Memorandum by T. Shepstone, 26 August 1867.

56. *Natal Witness*, 3 November 1871. This report is vague, probably in order to avoid incrimination of the reporter's informant.

Wilkes went on to express further grievances, arising out of a Bill introduced by the Government proposing that "trespassing" cattle could be impounded by the owner or occupier of the land. These cattle could be claimed (for a fee) from the nearest pound. The tone of his complaint suggests the degree of antagonism between white farmers and Blacks, particularly the Hlubi:

If the cattle of white men are found on Government lands they can be impounded. Have any such orders been issued with respect to Kafirs' cattle? (No). I can of late years see a marked difference in behaviour, and want of respect in Kafirs....Formerly it was a custom of Kafirs not to travel with cattle without a pass....Is it so now? No. The other day, seeing two driving cattle, I asked for their pass, and they answered with the greatest insolence (although driving them over my farm) they wanted none, as they were for their Chief Ballela. They would not have answered so some years ago⁵⁷.

A few months later the Estcourt correspondent for the *Witness* asserted that "on the question of labor something will have to be done or farming operations will have, in many places, to be given up altogether"⁵⁸. Only farmers in the thornveld area (See Map 2) could obtain sufficient labourers. Elsewhere in the Weenen district farmers could only obtain two or three hands. The correspondent went on to report that only twelve Africans could be mustered to work on the building of a road to Estcourt⁵⁹.

A letter from an "Up-country struggler in 1873 conceals his resentment of conditions in the Weenen district locations in quasi-religious terms:

57. *Natal Witness*, 3 September 1872.
58. *Natal Witness*, 24 December 1872.
59. *Ibid.*

Verily the land is dried up like unto a withered leaf and blades of green grass are few and far between. The sheep and goats of thy servant are perishing of want... There is a green and fertile country above us, from the headwaters of the great Tugela, to the head of the little Bushman's River, but this is reserved for the favoured Black children of Cain, and dire are the threats of the official, who vows all stock of any miserable white man which may trespass on this favoured region, shall be pounded instanter (sic.)⁶⁰.

Detectable in these comments is the resentment and rancour felt by these white Weenen country farmers against their obviously successful and thriving Black neighbours. Detectable too is what Bundy has termed the "febrile quality" in the temperament of white Natalians; that is the quality which, "at least in its observable forms - is frequently hysteric and delusive, occasionally comic, and sometimes vicious"⁶¹.

As growing numbers of Hlubi and Ngwe were incorporated into the economic life of South Africa in the late 1860s and early 1870s so it would seem that the leaders in their society found it increasingly difficult to control their followers. What evidence exists suggests that Langalibalele took steps to counter or at least come to terms with this situation that allowed his followers more numerous avenues of escape from his authority.

In 1865 Langalibalele gave missionary Hansen an almost free rein to preach and convert among his people and often came to listen to Sunday services. Over the next two years however, as a number of Hlubi began moving their homesteads to the station, Langalibalele withdrew his support. He refused to send his sons to the mission school, and ordered his brother to move away from Emphangweni when the latter evinced

60. Natal Witness, 7 October 1873.
61. Bundy, 'African Peasants', p.222.

an interest in baptism⁶². However Langalibalele remained on friendly terms with Hansen; what he appeared to dislike was the idea that his people should fall under the missionary's influence.

At Emangweni, Ngwe individuals showed a greater interest in Christianity and in living at the station. Neizel had managed to convert nineteen people by 1869 (compared to Hansen's two converts in eight years), and in 1869 he had 300 people actually living at the mission station⁶³. It does not seem improbable that the reason Neizel had more followers was because the Ngwe, after Phuthini's death in 1863, lacked the same degree of central authority with the power to prevent subjects from moving to the station. Baso, Shepstone's chosen interim chief after Phuthini's death (see Chapter Four) relinquished chieftainship in 1867 in favour of Manzezulu, apparently the most popular choice as chief among the Ngwe⁶⁴. Shepstone appears to have accepted this decision by Baso. However the division between the Ngwe, begun by Shepstone's intercession in 1864, clearly persisted, for in late 1872, when Manzezulu died, open fighting broke out between Baso's supporters and those who believed that he had in some way been responsible for Manzezulu's death⁶⁵. The outcome was that early in 1873 Baso moved with his six wives and principal supporters and settled in Klip River district⁶⁶. This long-drawn out succession dispute may have provided some of the impetus behind the move of numbers of the Ngwe to the mission station.

It is difficult to establish Langalibalele's attitude to the departure of young men of his chieftom for the diamond fields. The acting magistrate in Estcourt claimed, in early 1873, that Langalibalele was encouraging his men to go to the fields⁶⁷ but according to another contemporary source he resented the fact that his young men were going

62. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.18.
63. Missionsberichte 1869, p.217.
64. NA 1/3/7, p.444, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 19 February 1867.
65. Missionsberichte 1874, pp.345-346.
66. BPP C-1141, p.119.
67. SNA 1/3/23, p.651, Mellersh to Shepstone, 27 February 1873.

off to the diggings. He is quoted as saying, "I do not go....I sit at home and am a great Chief. The white people take our young men there to work"⁶⁸. According to Lucas the exodus to the diamond fields had "revolutionised the ideas and feelings of the native race. It [had] undermined the political influence of the elder chiefs, such as Langalibalele himself"⁶⁹. Research conducted on the responses of the Sotho chiefs who had followers at the diggings indicates that they had a large measure of control over them and were taking a portion of their wages in the form of tribute⁷⁰. It appears that by mid-1873 the leaders of the Hlubi were coming to see ways in which they could directly profit from the opening of the diamond fields. For example Langalibalele's principal wife, Mzamose, reputedly had a workforce labouring for her at the fields⁷¹. It does not seem however that Langalibalele had any means of successfully preventing the flow of individual Hlubi to Griqualand West.

However if Langalibalele had few means of actually preventing the diffraction of his people, he was not slow to take similar advantage of some of the opportunities seized by his followers during the late 1860s and early 1870s. For example, he was one of the first men in his chiefdom to procure a plough, and employed his own expert ploughman, a man named Stoffel⁷². Similarly he was one of the first to obtain a gun and in 1871 applied for permission to own a third gun⁷³. He appeared by 1873 to have a plentiful supply of gunpowder which he distributed to his followers⁷⁴, though Hlubi men would have been able to purchase their own supplies of gunpowder and ammunition at the diggings. He and his headmen were owners of "fine horses"⁷⁵. These facts seem to

68. T.J. Lucas, The Zulus and the British Frontiers (London, 1877), p.161.
 69. Ibid., p.159.
 70. J. Kimble, 'Aspects of the economic history of Lesotho 1830-1885', (Paper on 'Pre-capitalist social formations and Colonial Penetration in Southern Africa', University of Lesotho, 1976), p.12.
 71. W. von Fintel, 'The Amahlubi Tribe', p.236.
 72. BPP C-1141, p.45.
 73. SNA 1/3/21, p.588, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 25 January 1871.
 74. Anon. The Kafir Revolt in Natal, p.61.
 75. Natal Witness, 28 November 1865.

10 head, while there was no limit imposed on hereditary chiefs. Local magistrates were to arrange for official witnesses at a marriage and the chief was to ensure that these witnesses were present. Chiefs were to be remunerated for their role⁷⁹.

Shepstone justified the Act to Africans on the grounds that their contribution to the colonial revenue was insufficient. By imposing a fee of £5 on marriages the Act might also have been intended to induce Africans into employment with whites. One of the purposes of the Act might therefore have been to appease the settler farmers who were pressuring the administration to introduce measures aimed at providing them with a reliable supply of Black labour. However, although the Act passed through the Legislative Council, it was criticised by many of the members because, in their opinion, it did not raise sufficient revenue from Africans in the colony⁸⁰.

Elders in the African chiefdoms of Natal seem to have resented the Marriage Act because it tampered with customary practices and placed an additional financial burden on the men⁸¹. It also forced the chiefs further along the road of becoming administrative agents for the colonial government. A deputation of elders from the Ngaswa (a group living near Pietermaritzburg) voiced their opposition to the Act in these terms:

It is all darkness and death, we see no light in the future, no evidence of our humanity being acknowledged - our labour is taken for the hut tax, our sons for the public works, and now our daughters are wanted to add money to the government stock⁸².

It is difficult to assess the reactions to the Act of other

79. Ibid., pp.83-84.
80. Natal Witness, 30 July 1869.
81. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.91.
82. SNA 1/7/8, memorandum by Shepstone on evasion by the Natives... of Law I of 1869, 2 September 1869.

"People of the Amahlubi, you had better warn that man, or some day he will get you into trouble"⁸⁶.

The Hlubi seemed to regard the Marriage Act as an attempt by the Government to tamper with the traditional practice of African marriage for its own financial benefit, and news of the proposals introduced a jarring note in relations between them and the authorities. In 1871 some members of the Hlubi allegedly refused to pay their tax. MacFarlane accused them of "systematically avoiding payment of the Hut Tax". Langalibalele and his *indunas* refuted this charge but the matter could not be set at rest because MacFarlane was unsure of the exact number of huts in the location⁸⁷. This was the first time since 1854 that the Hlubi had been accused of avoiding payment of the Hut Tax and it seems to have been related to the displeasure felt by some individuals among them towards the regulations imposed in the terms of the Marriage Act.

Thus by the early 1870s tensions between the Hlubi and local white farmers were rising concurrently with tensions between the Hlubi and the authorities. The Hlubi and Ngwe had generally been less affected by the depression of the mid to late 1860s, while white farmers had suffered economic setbacks. Farming, particularly for a local market, had become an unattractive proposition to many settlers, and African producers, to the frustration of many white farmers, had been able to capture a large share of the local produce market. At the same time a situation of mutual suspicion and anger was developing between the Hlubi and the authorities as a result of the terms contained in the Marriage Act.

After the discovery of diamonds in 1867 Black and white farmers were provided with a new market in Griqualand West. The emphasis placed by Natal Africans from about the early 1860s on the provision of foodstuffs for a local market appears to have given them a headstart over their white counterparts. The Hlubi and Ngwe, particularly, expanded agricultural production to meet the demands of the Overberg and Griqualand

86. BPP C-1141, p.6.
87. SNA 1/3/22, pp.671-672, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 3 July 1871.

West market. Etherington, basing his evidence on the reports of missionary Hansen, has gone so far as to say that the Hlubi "adapted themselves to Natal's European economy with a success unparalleled among tribalised Africans in the colony"⁸⁸.

The economic revival in Natal, stimulated in part by the discovery of diamonds, renewed the settlers demands upon the administration to alter its "Native policy" in ways that would release greater number of Africans onto the labour market. For their part, those Africans who were prepared to sell their labour were more inclined to seek the best wages available. The Hlubi and Ngwe, geographically placed in an advantageous position to travel to Kimberley, were among the first Natal Africans to avail themselves of the higher wages available at the diamond fields and considerable numbers went to work there from about 1869. Thus the rising demand for labour on the part of the farmers, consequent on the economic upturn of the 1870s, coincided with a growing shortage of labour in the colony as a result of the migration of Natal Africans to the diamond fields. Shepstone did not remain deaf to the settlers' demands on the Government. He sought ways of bringing Black labour into Natal from outside the colony and seems to have attempted to pressure Africans in Natal into employment with whites by the introduction of the Marriage Act.

The distinctive features of these years (1865-1873) are the growth in the range of economic demands on the Hlubi and Ngwe at a time when there were increasing economic opportunities for them, the increasing wealth of the Hlubi and Ngwe, a renewed and vigorous demand for African labour throughout Natal, and consequent upon this, an intensification of economic competition between whites and Blacks in Natal. More specifically it has been indicated that this state of competition existed between the Hlubi and Ngwe and the white farmers of Weenen district in the 1870s. The manner in which this competition was resolved is the theme of the next chapter.

88. Etherington, 'Rise of the Kholwa', pp.70-71.

CHAPTER SIX

* THE CLASH WITH SETTLER INTERESTS, 1873 - 1874

It was argued in the previous chapter that by the early 1870s tensions between white farmers and African peasant producers in Natal were rising because they were now competing more directly than ever before. The settlers were consequently placing more pressure on the colonial government to meet their labour requirements in a period of economic upswing. It was argued that the administration, by about 1870, seems to have been gaining confidence in its ability to implement far-reaching changes in the control of its African subjects. These changes were made partly in the Government's own economic interests, but also in the interests of settler pressure groups, although the administration did not move as far or as fast as many of the colonists wanted.

The enforcement of gun registration in 1873 marked another step in the Government's attempts to regulate the lives of Africans in Natal. In February 1872 the administration had instructed magistrates to ensure that all guns owned by Africans in their divisions were registered. Since 1859 Africans in Natal had been obliged to obtain written permission from their local magistrate if they wanted to hold a gun, but in practice the Government was unable to enforce the law¹. The opening of the diamond diggings in 1867 made it easier for Africans to obtain guns. It has often been assumed that Africans were given guns in lieu of wages by the white diggers, but Sieborger has observed that, as a general rule, Africans purchased guns with the money they earned at the diggings. Southey, the Secretary to the Cape Government, maintained that one of the reasons why Africans preferred to purchase guns at the fields was because they could obtain them for cash and did

1. Guest, 'Crisis in Natal', p.32.

not have to dispose of cattle or other property².

The importing of guns into Natal by Africans was a widespread practice. The Natal Mercury estimated that from 1870 onwards 9,000 were brought annually into Natal³. While this number seems an exaggeration, during the last nine months of 1873, 18,000 guns were imported into Griqualand West, principally for sale to Africans⁴. Certainly Natal Africans were no different from other men at the fields in that they took advantage of the opportunity to purchase guns. Early in 1872 the Natal Executive Council was worried that the holding of guns by Africans might allow them to "rise up" against the whites⁵. The law of 1872 was therefore passed in an attempt to control the influx of guns. The payment of a fee of 6d for a licence ensured that the measure would also raise a small revenue from Africans. The Gun Law of 1872 was also followed in 1873 by the suspension of the issue of licences for the trade of firearms into and out of Natal⁶.

The attempts of the Council to limit the African gun trade were thwarted in several ways. The Gun Law was difficult to enforce because magistrates did not have staff to check on the registration of guns. Chiefs were obliged under the Law to ensure that their followers registered their guns, but for them to establish which of their people owned guns was a difficult task, assuming in the first place that they were willing to co-operate with the Government. Some whites in Natal appear to have been party to infractions of the Natal Gun Law. Three of Shepstone's sons, for instance, allegedly gave guns to their employees in lieu of wages at the diggings⁷. The Cape Government refused to co-operate with the Natal Government in suspending the issue of licences for the firearm trade⁸. During the early 1870s the Natal administration's

2. Sieborger, 'Recruitment and organisation', p.26.
3. Natal Mercury, 2 December 1873.
4. Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.32.
5. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, p.114.
6. Minute Book of Natal Executive Council, vol. 9, p.188.
7. Lucas, The Zulus, p.159.
8. Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.32.

attempts to curb the holding of guns by Africans were therefore largely unsuccessful.

In the Weenen district MacFarlane did not act on the administration's order to ensure the registration of firearms until early in 1873. Why he did not act when the circular to magistrates in February 1872 containing these instructions was circulated is not known. Sometime in the first few months of 1873 (exactly when is difficult to ascertain) MacFarlane demanded that Langalibalele send in the guns of his men for registration. Why he decided to pick specifically on the Hlubi is also not completely clear. Firearms were a prized possession among all Africans in Natal⁹, and the Hlubi could not be accused of specifically refusing to register guns; indeed of the twenty one guns sent into Estcourt for registration by Africans in Weenen district during 1871-1872 thirteen belonged to members of the Hlubi chiefdom¹⁰. MacFarlane would have been aware from Bell's communication from Leribe in February 1873¹¹, that large numbers of the Hlubi were employed at the diamond fields. His summons may have been a manifestation of his long-standing and deep-seated dislike and suspicion of the Hlubi chief. It might also have been a response to complaints from white farmers.

In the event, Langalibalele did not respond to the demand that guns belonging to his subjects be sent in for registration. Again, lacking reports of any of MacFarlane's dealings with the Hlubi in early 1873, one can only posit possible reasons for Langalibalele's refusal. It was said among Africans in the Weenen district that guns held at the magistrate's office were often damaged or simply not returned¹². Langalibalele was later to claim that he did not know which of his

9. Lucas, *The Zulus*, p.159.
10. BPP C-1143, p.13, evidence derived by Colenso from Perrins Register of Guns.
11. SNA 1/3/23, pp.649-656, Mellersh to She, stone, 14 February 1873.
12. F.E. Colenso, *History of the Zulu War and its Origin* (Westport, 1970), p.22.

followers owned guns, and that he did not have the means to enforce their registration¹³.

In April messengers arrived from MacFarlane instructing Langelibalele to appear in Pietermaritzburg to account for his failure to obey the magistrate's directive. He temporised, at first refusing to travel with the messengers and finally agreeing that he would meet them at the Zwart Kop location outside Pietermaritzburg, from where they could travel together into the town. However a few days later he sent his chief *induna*, Mabuhle, to Zwart Kop with the message that a painful leg had prevented his coming¹⁴. Langelibalele did however go to Estcourt at the end of April at the same time Mabuhle travelled to Zwart Kop. At Estcourt he encountered Rudolph, MacFarlane's interpreter, a man with whom he had an openly hostile relationship¹⁵. A quarrel ensued, Rudolph allegedly telling Langelibalele that "Mr. M. does not like a man who answers him when he happens to speak (and) you are a man who continually likes to answer"¹⁶. Rudolph's particular anger stemmed from the fact that "the old ruffian" had recently refused to pay his taxes on the grounds that he would be with Shepstone in Pietermaritzburg at the end of April and beginning of May¹⁷. How much the chief owed and when it should have been paid is not clear from the evidence.

The outcome of Langelibalele's visit, which had probably been intended as a conciliatory move, was thus a worsening of his relationship with the local government officials. The fact that he was prepared to travel to Estcourt but not to Pietermaritzburg was in itself significant. Langelibalele must have been mindful of the fact that similar summonses issued by the Government to the chiefs Matshana and Sidoyi some fifteen years before had served as a prelude to an attack on their people by the colonial forces (See Chapter Four). He may quite simply have been

13. Lucas, The Zulus, pp.161-162.
14. N. Herd, The Bent Pine - The Trial of Chief Langelibalele (Johannesburg, 1976), p.11.
15. BPP C-1025, Minutes and Proceedings of Court Inquiry into Charges against Langelibalele, p.54.
16. BPP C-1141, p.4.
17. SNA 1/6/8, p.12, MacFarlane to Shepstone n.d., enclosing Rudolph to MacFarlane, 21 May 1873.

afraid of what might follow if he obeyed the summons to appear before Shepstone in Pietermaritzburg. Langalibalele was later to cite the instance in 1837 when his brother Dlomo had been summoned by Dingane and immediately killed¹⁸ (See Chapter one) to illustrate his suspicion of government summonses.

Towards the end of May another message arrived from MacFarlane instructing Langalibalele to present himself before Shepstone¹⁹. This message was apparently ignored. It is difficult to tell how many messages were actually sent. MacFarlane was later to allege that he sent several messages but Colenso painstakingly disproves this by establishing that MacFarlane was absent from Estcourt during the period when he claimed he had sent the messages²⁰. A dearth of written information makes it impossible to establish when each "message" was sent and how Langalibalele reacted to it.

At this juncture, early in June 1873, while the dispute was developing between the Hlubi leaders and the Government, a party of Weenen-Karkloof volunteers arrived in the vicinity of the location on a training camp²¹. These volunteers normally held their annual camps in the Weenen or Klip river district but had held their camp for 1873 earlier in the year. This second camp was being held in preparation for Shepstone's forthcoming trip to Zululand²² (see below) but the Hlubi seem to have seen it as an ominous move. It seems probable, as Etherington had argued, that the presence of the camp raised the fear among the Hlubi that they were either to be attacked, or at least were being put under some kind of surveillance. MacFarlane reported that "Balele's men [are] in an awful stir about our camp"²³. At the same time reports in the *Witness* that two Hlubi spies had been caught at the

18. BPP C-1141, p.1.
19. Herd, Bent Pine, p.11.
20. BPP C-1141, p.22.
21. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.12.
22. BPP C-1141, p.56; Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.12.
23. SNA 1/6/8, p.5, MacFarlane to Shepstone n.d., (probably 6 June 1873).

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18. BPP C-1141, p.1.
19. Herd, Bent Pine, p.11.
20. BPP C-1141, p.22.
21. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.12.
22. BPP C-1141, p.56; Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.12.
23. SNA 1/6/8, p.5, MacFarlane to Shepstone n.d., (probably 6 June 1873).

camp²⁴, and statements in the Legislative Council by Walter MacFarlane expressing the need for a more efficient militia, "touched all the current fears" among the whites of the inland districts of Natal²⁵.

It appears that at this point Langalibalele attempted to negotiate with MacFarlane in an effort to placate the authorities. He sent three men to Estcourt to pay the taxes which were overdue, and to explain that he would meet MacFarlane in Estcourt but saw no reason for going to Pietermaritzburg²⁶. But by this stage MacFarlane was in no mood for concessions. "Even should Balele obey before his [Pine's]²⁷ arrival", he wrote in a letter to Shepstone early in July, "I would allow him to hang on till you determine on the course to be taken - signal punishment it must be"²⁸. A few days later Langalibalele attempted to get Faku, a minor chief who was MacFarlane's *induna*, to intercede with MacFarlane on his behalf. The magistrate was uncompromising. "It would never do to give way now", he advised the Native Affairs department, "as the whole native population in this country is watching for the result"²⁹.

In this way MacFarlane closed the door to Langalibalele's attempts at conciliation. It appears that he had already decided that Langalibalele should be punished. From the middle of July to mid-September the colonial government postponed further action on this issue as Shepstone was on a visit to the Zulu kingdom to convey to Cetshwayo the Natal Government's recognition of his accession to the Zulu kingdom. Langalibalele seems to

24. Natal Witness, 6 June 1873.
25. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.10.
26. SNA 1/6/8, no. 6, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 3 July 1873.
27. Lieutenant-Governor Musgrave had left in April 1873; his successor, Sir Benjamin Pine, only arrived in late July.
28. SNA 1/6/8, no. 6, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 3 July 1873.
29. SNA 1/6/8, no. 4, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 July 1873.

30. Magistrate's Report 1874, p. 247.
31. Ibid., p. 149.
32. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p. 10.
33. Natal Witness, 2-11-73.

at least of what might be done if he were to be allowed to remain in the country. The fact that he had been allowed to remain in the country was a matter of course, and it was not until the end of the year that the government decided to take any action against him.

Langalibalele's attempt to negotiate with MacFarlane was a failure. He was not allowed to meet him in Estcourt, and he was not allowed to pay the taxes which were overdue. This was a clear indication that the government was not willing to negotiate with him.

MacFarlane's decision to close the door to Langalibalele's attempts at conciliation was a wise one. It was clear that Langalibalele was not willing to negotiate, and that he was only trying to buy time. By closing the door to negotiation, MacFarlane was able to force the government to take action against him.

The government's decision to postpone further action on this issue was also a wise one. It was clear that Shepstone was on a visit to the Zulu kingdom, and that it was not possible to take any action against Langalibalele at that time.

24. Natal Witness, 6 June 1873.
25. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.10.
26. SNA 1/6/8, no. 6, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 3 July 1873.
27. Lieutenant-Governor Musgrave had left in April 1873; his successor, Sir Benjamin Pine, only arrived in late July.
28. SNA 1/6/8, no. 6, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 3 July 1873.
29. SNA 1/6/8, no. 4, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 July 1873.

have been disturbed by the possibility of a major confrontation developing with the authorities. Early in September he told missionaries Neizel and Hansen that he had offered to pay Shepstone a fine, but that his offer had been refused³⁰. When and to whom he had made this offer is not clear from the available official records. Nor is it apparent which precise "misdemeanour" the fine was for. The missionaries suggested to Langalibalele that he should meet Shepstone in Pietermaritzburg on his return from Zululand, but groups of young men thronging around their chief urged him not to attend. Langalibalele told Neizel that, "as the government had refused his money he was afraid to go"³¹. It seems, from Neizel's account, that during this interim period, the younger men were influencing Langalibalele and that the Hlubi elders were not able to effectively control them. The missionaries, who were in a position to intercede between Langalibalele and the Government, failed (not for the last time) to do so. Etherington has argued that this failure constituted a neglect of duty, and that their silence "was inexcusable in view of the circumstances"³².

Shepstone arrived back in Pietermaritzburg in late September or early October. At a meeting with Pine he and the new Lieutenant-Governor decided to issue an ultimatum to Langalibalele to present himself in Pietermaritzburg³³. It is probable that Pine, who had opposed Shepstone's policies in his previous term of office in the early 1850's (See Chapter Three), viewed this incident as an opportunity to show his willingness to work with Shepstone, and to assert his authority over the African population of Natal. The ultimatum was issued in the name of the governor, and two *indunas* of high standing, Mahoyiza and Myembi, were chosen to deliver it so as to emphasize its importance.

When the messengers arrived in the Hlubi location Langalibalele neither refused nor complied with their demand that he should proceed to Pietermaritzburg. His prevarication may have been due to uncertainty or fear, or it may have been an attempt to seek more time to consider the ultimatum. The messengers returned to Pietermaritzburg and informed

30. Missionsberichte 1874, p.347.
 31. Ibid., p.348.
 32. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.24.
 33. Herd, Bent Pine, p.12.

Shepstone that at a meeting with the chief they had been insultingly treated. They alleged that they had been forced to strip off some of their clothes and had been partly searched³⁴. It seems plausible that Langalibalele, as he claimed later, was afraid that the messengers were carrying weapons. Later, whilst explaining his actions, he cited the instance in 1858 when Matshana had been summoned to meet John Shepstone and had arrived unarmed, as agreed, while Shepstone and his men had carried concealed weapons (See Chapter Three). A point overlooked by most commentators on the "Matshana incident" is that the Hlubi themselves had been party to this act of apparent deception. How seriously Pine and Shepstone viewed Langalibalele's behaviour at the time is not clear. However it seems that the alleged mistreatment of the messengers had an important bearing upon Pine's and Shepstone's action from this time onward. From their point of view Langalibalele's slighting of the messengers appears to have given them further justification to act against the Hlubi.

In the meantime panic was spreading among the white inhabitants of Weenen county. A group of whites, led by F.W. Moor, a local J.P., was causing alarm with talk of the imminence of hostilities between Africans and whites. Farming operations were suspended, women and children sent to Estcourt and Pietermaritzburg, livestock sent to the Orange Free State and the Church at Estcourt was prepared as a laager in case of need. At a tense meeting in Estcourt on 23 October the fear was raised that the "Kafirs were coming"³⁷.

Such fears were partly based on fact. In late October it was reported from Estcourt that 'squads' of Africans were making their way from Pietermaritzburg and Durban to the Hlubi location, and white farmers reported that individual workers and tenants were moving off their farms and returning to the Hlubi location³⁸. Some of these people may have been

34. BPP C-1141, pp.30-35.
 35. Leandy du Bufanos, 'The Matyana affair', p.17.
 36. BPP, C-1141, p.33.
 37. Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, p.37.
 38. Extra to *Natal Witness*, 28 October 1873.

returning to rally round their chief but it is more likely that they were returning to safeguard their homes and families in the event of trouble. These movements only helped confirm the settler view that the Hlubi were massing for an attack.

It seems certain that some whites in Weenen district were actively trying to create panic in an attempt to force the Government to take some strong action against the Hlubi. Even MacFarlane and Captain Lucas, the magistrate at Ladysmith, became annoyed by this scaremongering. "Confound Moor and others who have talked until this panic has come out of it", Lucas wrote to MacFarlane towards the end of October³⁹. Moor and others seemed to have been playing upon the fears of the whites in a deliberate attempt to push the Government into forceful action against the Hlubi. In the last week of October Lucas wrote to Shepstone:

I found yesterday from all sources that Mr. Moor, J.P., has been the cause of all the panic...It appears to me that it is the wish of Moor and others who sail in the same boat to force the hand of the Governor and oblige him to take action in the field, in fact shoot some d.....d niggers⁴⁰.

The panicky actions of the whites in turn created alarm among the Africans in the Weenen and Klip River districts. The Hlubi, fearing an attack on them by the colonists, prepared themselves accordingly. Langalibalele moved to his homestead at Nobamba in the high country where he appeared to receive substantial support from his followers⁴¹. Sprinkling "ceremonies", usually a form of preparation for war, were held at Nobamba and at Emphangweni⁴² in the lowlands, and arms were

39. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.14, quoting from SNA 1/6/8, Lucas to Shepstone, n.d.
40. SNA 1/6/8, no. 30, Lucas to Shepstone, n.d. (probably 24 or 25 October).
41. Anon., Kafir Revolt in Natal, statements of Ngcamane, p.61, Mhaba, p.57, Mango p.50.
42. Ibid., statement of Mango, p.68.

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apparently stored at Emphangweni⁴³. However groups of Hlubi living at Miza (at Ntabamhlooe) and Amahendini (on the Bushman's river some fourteen miles from Nobamba) appear to have been less affected by the scare⁴⁴. The degree of fear and suspicion that was prevalent among the Hlubi towards the end of October is suggested by a statement later made by a Hlubi commoner named Tshiabantu who visited Langalibalele near the end of October to advise him to pay money to Mahoiza, the government messenger. When he arrived at Nobamba,

a man called Umzela said I had come to hoodwink them, and to deceive them by telling lies; that I was not to be trusted, and that I did not belong to the tribe, for I had turned my back upon them⁴⁵.

Individual Hlubi apparently also attempted at this stage to get Hansen and Neizel to intervene, but the missionaries, "in a crisis which cried out for an intermediary...could not or would not act with decision"⁴⁶. The missionaries had neither the force of character nor (as they were German) the close ties with the authorities that would have enabled them to mediate between the two sides⁴⁷.

Given the fact that the younger Hlubi men appeared disinclined to support the idea that Langalibalele should reach an accommodation with the authorities, it may have been that some of the Hlubi elders were attempting to use the missionaries to defuse what they saw as a dangerous state of affairs. The sense of fear and suspicion that seems to have been spreading among the Hlubi in the location seemed to enable the younger men to influence their chief. Langalibalele's younger advisors (Mabuhle, Magongolweni, Keve and M'kumjana) were largely responsible for

43. Ibid, statement of Ngungwana, p.51.
 44. Ibid., statement of Ngwahla, p.59, Tshiabantu, p.74.
 45. Ibid., p.74.
 46. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.19.
 47. Ibid., pp.18-19.

convincing him not to travel to Pietermaritzburg⁴⁸.

The chief himself was apparently still considering ways of appeasing the authorities. According to Colenso, at the end of October he sent a bag of gold to Pietermaritzburg as a gesture of submission. However, on his arrival in Pietermaritzburg, his emissary Mbombo appeared to have encountered a body of troops about to leave for the Weenen district. He allegedly fled back to the location carrying the news that soldiers were leaving Pietermaritzburg for the location⁵⁰.

The authorities had decided by this time to employ troops to resolve the disorder in Weenen county. Writing from Estcourt on 30 October MacFarlane urged that soldiers be sent "to stop the panic which has taken possession of a portion of the white inhabitants, and which was certain to spread among the natives, as it has done and is doing"⁵¹. On 27 October Pine laid before the Executive Council evidence received from Griffith, the Cape Government's agent in Basutoland, that Langalibalele and his people were in communication with the Sotho chiefs Masopha and Molapo⁵². The Council readily approved Pine's proposal to arrest the Hlubi chief before he could flee the colony, and the governor at once proceeded to put his plan into action. On the 30th a government force, accompanied by Pine himself, left Pietermaritzburg to set up camp at Fort Nottingham⁵³, where it would meet up with volunteer units and African levies from northern Natal. The plan was for the combined force to block a possible escape route through the Drakensberg, to surround the Hlubi location, and then to arrest Langalibalele and his principal followers⁵⁴.

48. Anon, *Kafir Revolt in Natal*, p.82.
49. BPP, C-1141, p.29.
50. Ibid.
51. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', pp.18-19, quoting from SNA 1/6/8, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 30 October 1873.
52. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.115.
53. GG, 1874, p.368, 4 November, 1873.
54. Ibid., p.427, 13 November 1873.

57. For fuller discussion of this event see Wood, *South Africa*, pp. 18-19. Wood, *South Africa*, pp. 40-41. The Lady with the Wild Hair, Langalibalele and the Natal Campaign (Durban, 1970).

For his part, the Hlubi chief had already decided to flee Natal and seek refuge in Basutoland. The final factor which led him to take this momentous step may have been the return of the envoy he had sent to Pietermaritzburg with a report that the Government was mustering an armed force against him. In the last few days of October or the first days of November Langalibalele made the laborious ascent up the Drakensberg pass that has since borne his name, and crossed into Basutoland. Most of the men of his chiefdom followed him with their cattle. The Hlubi women, children and elders either took refuge in caves in the vicinity of the location or straggled behind the main body of men⁵⁵.

When the government forces arrived at the Hlubi location on 2 November they consequently found the homesteads devoid of people and cattle. It was only at this point that Pine despatched his flying columns to implement his plan of blocking possible escape routes over the mountains. The next day the remainder of the government force was positioned round the location, and on the 4th messengers were sent out to encourage "loyal" Hlubi to return to the location if they did not want to be identified with the "rebels". Hlubi resident on Crown lands or on white farms were to be told to remain quietly in their homesteads⁵⁶.

The attempt to prevent the Hlubi still remaining in the location from escaping over the Drakensberg turned into a fiasco. The main flying column of African levies was unable to find the way to its intended position, and a smaller party of Natal Carbineers, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel A.W. Durnford, reached the top of the Drakensberg a day later than planned. Early on 4 November Durnford's force clashed with a party of Hlubi at the summit of Langalibalele pass, lost five men killed, including three colonists, and fled back down the mountain⁵⁷.

55. Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.39.
 56. BPP C-1141, p.64.
 57. For fuller discussion of this event see Herd, Bent Pine, pp.18-30; Guest, Crisis in Natal, pp.40-44; The Ladysmith Historical Society, Langalibalele and the Natal Carbineers (Ladysmith, 1973).

News of the death of the three whites on the top of Bushman's Pass was received by Pine on the 5 November and subsequently "ran through Natal like sheet lightning, discharging thirty years store of accumulated hate and fear"⁵⁸. Pine ordered a military sweep of the location on the 6 November and the white volunteers, incensed by the news of the loss of their comrades, showed little mercy for the Hlubi who were hiding in the location or in the caves near the Drakensberg. According to Faku, Captain Lucas ordered him to "bring in the women, but he [Lucas] did not want to see the face of any of the men"⁵⁹. The refugees were driven out of their hiding places by rifle and rocket fire, and pockets of resistance were ruthlessly destroyed. Some Hlubi resident on private farms were treated as though they were rebels despite the assurance to the contrary that had been made known on 4 November. In one case Hlubi living on the farm of Mellersh (occasionally acting magistrate in Estcourt) were robbed of their possessions by African auxiliaries and three of them killed⁶⁰. One group of Hlubi, among them Langalibalele's old mother, found shelter at Hansen's mission station. Hansen, who "imposed a strict missionary democracy on the little band of old men and women", tried to force her to eat with the commoners. This she refused to do, and eventually died of starvation⁶¹.

At the same time that the sweep of the location was taking place, the Natal authorities drew up plans for the pursuit of Langalibalele and the body of Hlubi with him. On 14 December Pine sent a message to Barkly, governor of the Cape, informing him of the turn that events had taken in Natal and requesting the co-operation of the Cape and Basutoland Governments in tracking down the Hlubi chief and bringing him to book⁶². Barkly despatched three companies of the 86 Regiment to Durban, and ordered two detachments from the eastern Cape to Basutoland to assist in Langalibalele's capture. Offers of assistance in preventing the Hlubi chief from leaving Basutoland were given by Adam Kok, the Griqua chief,

58. Etherington, 'Labour supply and the South African confederation', p.246.
 59. BPP C-1141, p.65.
 60. Natal Witness, 10 March 1874. Mellersh later gained compensation for these innocent people.
 61. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.21.
 62. GH, vol. 1325, no. 36, Pine to Barkly, 14 December 1873.

and by President Burghers of the O.F.S. From the Natal side, pursuing forces under Capt. Albert Allison and Captain Hawkins, R.M. of Richmond, crossed into northern and southern Basutoland respectively to capture the fleeing Hlubi⁶³.

On 11 November Pine issued a proclamation declaring Langalibalele deposed and formally dispossessing the Hlubi of their land. By this time Hlubi women and children were already being allotted to white farmers not resident in Pietermaritzburg or Durban, or were being put out to work as "bondsmen" on public works in the colony. Concerning the future of the Hlubi location, the *Witness* was suggesting that "there is no location in the colony so suitably situated for occupation by white settlers"⁶⁴.

It was not only the Hlubi who were the object of the colonists' vengeance and cupidity: by mid-November the colonists had found an excuse for turning on the neighbouring Ngwe as well. According to Mbalo, MacFarlane said to him on 30 October (before the Government force left Estcourt):

You had better stay, Umbalo, and cultivate your lands as usual. You are not at all concerned in this; it is only Langalibalele's affair.... you must stay quiet and not be afraid at all⁶⁵.

But when Captain Lucas and a contingent of 1000 African levies and 30 to 40 white volunteers arrived at the Hlubi location on 2 or 3 November they quickly became embroiled in a dispute with the Ngwe. Lucas had counted on obtaining captured Hlubi cattle to supply his forces' food requirements, but, finding none, he demand provisions from the Ngwe, indicating that they would be compensated later. One of Lucas' contingent, Field-Cornet J. Gregory, approached the Ngwe leaders and

63. Herd, *Bent Pine*, p.43.
64. BPP C-1141, p.67; *Natal Witness*, 18 November 1874.
65. BPP C-1141, p.77.

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demanded 50 head of cattle⁶⁶. As Umbalo was not present Gregory spoke to his brother who allegedly "did not feel that he had the authority to hand over the cattle"⁶⁷. A group of young men acted with hostility to this demand and Gregory returned, reporting the incident to Lucas and MacFarlane on 5 or 6 November⁶⁸. The 50 head were delivered on 9 November but MacFarlane was not satisfied, presumably because he had been further annoyed by the failure of the Ngwe to obey a command, given on the 5 November, to hand in their guns⁶⁹. On the 7 or 8 November, MacFarlane undertook to supply Allison's flying column with cattle and demanded a further 500 head from the Ngwe. When on the 12 November only 130 head were delivered, he demanded an extra 1000⁷⁰. On 15 November Lucas reported to MacFarlane that Hlubi cattle were hidden among the herds of the Ngwe⁷¹, and on the 18 November MacFarlane, who was in charge of operations in the location, decided to forcibly disarm the Ngwe and impose a fine of 20s for each occupied hut in the location⁷². Apart from the harbouring of Hlubi cattle, there seem to have been no signs that the Ngwe were joined in conspiracy with the Hlubi. Missionary Neizel rode daily amongst the Ngwe during the first weeks of November but did not notice "anything special" (as he put it) to indicate preparedness for conflict, beyond daily communications with the Hlubi. They had even started to plough⁷³. Even MacFarlane seemed unperturbed by Lucas' news that the Ngwe were secreting Hlubi cattle, suggesting that Lucas had possibly over-estimated the number of cattle so hidden⁷⁴.

Etherington has argued that on 18 November MacFarlane "for the first time... showed signs of losing control and succumbing to his neighbours' [the colonists'] demand for draconian measures"⁷⁵. However, it appears more likely that from 18 November there was not so marked a departure in MacFarlane's attitude as Etherington has claimed.

66. A full account is in *Missionsberichte* 1874, pp.341-361.
 67. *Ibid.*, p.350.
 68. SNA 1/6/8, no. 90, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 25 November 1873.
 69. *Ibid.*
 70. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.23.
 71. SNA 1/6/8, no. 43, Lucas to Shepstone, 15 November 1873.
 72. SNA 1/6/8, no. 54, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
 73. *Missionsberichte* 1874, p.348.
 74. SNA 1/6/8, no. 45, MacFarlane to Shepstone, n.d.
 75. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.

In order to apprehend the Hlubi, cattle had to be obtained for Allison's flying column, and he therefore capitalised on a number of minor issues to justify seizing more Ngwe cattle. MacFarlane would have been aware that the Ngwe would probably resist such a move. However the consequences of this resistance were of less importance than the capture and punishment of Langalibalele, his overriding objective from as early as mid-July.

On the 18 November Pine ordered Lucas to surround the Ngwe location and on the following day a sweep of the location ensued. Over the next week 900 cattle were seized and other possessions, including clothes and mealies, were confiscated⁷⁶. MacFarlane then suggested that the male prisoners be sent down to Pietermaritzburg where they could be "utilised.... in the form of chain gangs for Harbour and Road Works for periods of from 3 to 7 years"⁷⁷. Shepstone ordered that the male prisoners be sent down to Pietermaritzburg to await trial for having allegedly assisted the Hlubi "rebels". Most of them, however, seem to have been let out on parole because of a shortage of cells in the Pietermaritzburg gaol.

The women, a number of whom had been raped by Africans serving in Lucas' force⁷⁸, were "taken charge of by the government and located at Kafir Kraals, pending the ultimate decision as to their disposal"⁷⁹. Etherington has asserted that MacFarlane felt remorse at the fate of the Ngwe⁸⁰, but it was the magistrate who had been so active in setting in motion the forces which were to destroy the chiefdom.

Once the Ngwe location had been largely depopulated the colonists lost no time in suggesting that it be "re-peopled" by whites. On 27

76. Missionsberichte, 1874, p.354.
77. SNA 1/6/8, no. 71, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 24 November 1873.
78. BPP C-1119, Colonial Office to Lucas, 20 June 1874; BPP C-1141, p.127, Statement of Umlanduli.
79. BPP C-1141, p.76.
80. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.

4 full account is in Missionsberichte 1874, pp.349-351.
13. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
14. SNA 1/6/8, no. 71, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 24 November 1873.
15. SNA 1/6/8, no. 72, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
16. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
17. Missionsberichte 1874, p.354.
18. SNA 1/6/8, no. 74, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
19. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
20. SNA 1/6/8, no. 75, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
21. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
22. SNA 1/6/8, no. 76, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
23. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
24. SNA 1/6/8, no. 77, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
25. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
26. SNA 1/6/8, no. 78, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
27. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
28. SNA 1/6/8, no. 79, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
29. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
30. SNA 1/6/8, no. 80, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
31. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
32. SNA 1/6/8, no. 81, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
33. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
34. SNA 1/6/8, no. 82, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
35. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
36. SNA 1/6/8, no. 83, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
37. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
38. SNA 1/6/8, no. 84, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
39. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
40. SNA 1/6/8, no. 85, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
41. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
42. SNA 1/6/8, no. 86, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
43. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
44. SNA 1/6/8, no. 87, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
45. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
46. SNA 1/6/8, no. 88, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
47. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
48. SNA 1/6/8, no. 89, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
49. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
50. SNA 1/6/8, no. 90, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
51. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
52. SNA 1/6/8, no. 91, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
53. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
54. SNA 1/6/8, no. 92, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
55. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
56. SNA 1/6/8, no. 93, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
57. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
58. SNA 1/6/8, no. 94, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
59. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
60. SNA 1/6/8, no. 95, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
61. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
62. SNA 1/6/8, no. 96, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
63. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
64. SNA 1/6/8, no. 97, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
65. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
66. SNA 1/6/8, no. 98, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
67. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
68. SNA 1/6/8, no. 99, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
69. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.
70. SNA 1/6/8, no. 100, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 18 November 1873.
71. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.16.

November a member of the Legislative Council, H. Winter, armed with a petition from 54 whites in the Weenen and Ladysmith districts, recommended the division of both locations into farms for whites on a freehold system⁸¹. Pine wrote to Kimberley immediately afterwards, informing him that "we intend to clear the two locations.... and to re-people them entirely by white settlers"⁸².

By the end of November the authorities were making no distinction between Hlubi and Ngwe prisoners or fugitives. On 30 November the Ngwe and Hlubi locations were both fired. All huts were razed to the ground. The elderly and infirm were left to fend for themselves without food or shelter⁸³.

During these weeks Neizel showed the same degree of irresolution as he had exhibited previously. He thought of "making representations to the government" from "time to time" but never did so⁸⁴. He managed to prevent the burning of homesteads on mission grounds and at one time gathered as many as 40 of the old people of the Ngwe at the station. Most of these had been taken in by relatives living on white farms by the end of January⁸⁵, and from then Neizel "got on with the proper work of saving souls"⁸⁶.

Meanwhile in the mountains of Basutoland, the pursuit of Langelibalele was continuing. The Hlubi chief must have had a plan in mind when he crossed into Basutoland. In view of the fact that he was crossing into a British colony it seems unlikely that he was attempting to escape permanently from British rule. It is probable that he thought

81. GG, vol. 10, 1872-1874, Votes and Proceedings, 27 November 1873, p.173.
82. BPP C-1025, p.19, Pine to Kimberley, 29 November 1873.
83. BPP C-1141, p.64.
84. Etherington, 'Why Langelibalele ran away', p.23.
85. Missionsberichte 1874, p.358.
86. Etherington, 'Why Langelibalele ran away', p.24.

that he could make peace from across the border, though the death of the volunteers at Bushman's Pass would have complicated this task even more. For six weeks Langalibalele and his followers remained in the mountains of eastern Basutoland. Hlubi messengers attempted to make contact with Molapo, son of Moshweshwe, from whom Langalibalele probably hoped to gain temporary support and shelter.

However the British authorities in Basutoland, believing that Langalibalele had been in contact with Molapo from about mid-October, warned him not to assist the Hlubi⁸⁷. It is likely that Molapo saw this as an opportunity to assert his position against his brother and arch-rival Letsie, the new paramount, by collaborating with the British in Langalibalele's arrest and thereby assuaging suspicions of disloyalty towards him on the part of the authorities. On 11 December Molapo lured Langalibalele's Hlubi into a trap. Only a small group under Mabuhle managed to avoid capture. Later Molapo's duplicity was bitterly condemned by other African groups in southern Africa⁸⁸.

On 13 December Allison's flying column arrived from Natal and took charge of 7,000 head of cattle captured from the Hlubi, of which 2000 were given to the Basutoland Africans who had helped the colonial forces⁸⁹. Lucas wrote to Allison congratulating him on his success. "I am only sorry", he added, "that you did not get the chance to kill more rebels"⁹⁰. Langalibalele was brought back to Pietermaritzburg in chains, arriving on 31 December to face the public derision of the white inhabitants. With 300 of his followers, he was placed in the local gaol.

While the attention of British authorities in South Africa was focussed on the capture of Langalibalele during December 1873 and January 1874, "mopping-up" operations were being conducted by volunteer units

87. Herd, Bent Pine, pp.43-45; Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.49.
88. Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.51.
89. BPP C-1025, no. 39, Barkly to Kimberley, 15 January 1874.
90. Albert Allison Papers, K.C.A.L., Lucas to Allison, 24 December 1873.

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and Black auxiliaries commanded by white officers in the Hlubi and Ngwe locations and close environs. These were conducted with extreme severity, and it was estimated that 150 to 200 Hlubi were killed⁹¹, though the number may have been greater. The fugitives took shelter in the many caves surrounding the location where they were hunted down and forced out by rifle and rocket fire, or by suffocation. Descriptions given by the Hlubi later give a vivid picture of these experiences.

When the force came, made fires, fought, etc., I was in the middle of the cave in the dark... I went as far as I could into the cave with the women, as I am not a fighting man. Twelve men were killed on this occasion.. four who refused to come out were killed by the fire which the natives made, and eight in the fight. Three women were also killed⁹².

Fear, not aggression, was the dominant emotion.

I was wounded in the leg. I was trying to prevent the force from placing the wood and making a fire. They told us to come out, but we were afraid to do so; some of the girls and women went out... but the men would not go out⁹³.

The white volunteers and Black auxiliaries appear to have acted on the supposition that all Hlubi and Ngwe were culpable of "disloyalty" to the Government. Baso, who had moved away from the Ngwe location to a locality across the Thukela some nine months before the outbreak of hostilities, was taken to prison in Ladysmith together with all his

91. Herd, Bent Pine, p.32; BPP C-1025, p.22, Anti-Slavery Society to Colonial office, 20 January 1874.
92. BPP C-1141, p.101, statement of Bejisa.
93. BPP C-1141, p.101, statement of Mgungulu.

followers. His cattle and mealies (recently fetched from the location) were plundered by Lucas' *indunas* from Ladysmith. Lucas allowed this despite knowing that Baso had left the Ngwe location and placed himself under the magistrate's jurisdiction in the Ladysmith district⁹⁴. In another case, an Ngwe returned from the diamond fields to find that his family's possessions had been stolen by the African levies under Lucas' command. When he demanded their return he was stripped of his clothes and money (10s.) and on Lucas' orders given 50 lashes; "they flogged (me) until I brought up blood from my mouth... and blood still comes from my chest to my mouth"⁹⁵, he later told the court.

It was mostly the African levies who were responsible for these brutalities, but they seem to have been given a fairly free rein by their white officers. The volunteers regarded the dislodging of the fugitives as a form of "rabbit-hunting", as affirmed in their letters home⁹⁶. In one notorious incident, Lieutenant M. Clarke R.A.⁹⁷ the magistrate of Umgeni district and a volunteer officer, in December 1873 ordered the shooting of an unarmed, wounded Hlubi captive. An Act passed by Pine on 15 January 1874 to indemnify certain people in regard to deeds committed during the period of martial law⁹⁸ prevented other instances of brutality from becoming generally known.

Throughout January Lucas continued to send captured Hlubi and Ngwe to Pietermaritzburg or Ladysmith⁹⁹. "Considerable numbers" fled into the O.F.S., where many remained, or else made their way into Basutoland¹⁰⁰. The administration was faced with the problem of what to do with the prisoners, particularly as the gaols in Pietermaritzburg were full to capacity. Suggestions had been made in November by McFarlane (see above)

94. Missionsberichte 1874. p.354; BPP C-1141, p.120.
 95. BPP C-1141, p.122.
 96. Anon. Transactions of the Aborigines Protection Society, K.C.A.L. (London, n.d.) p.82.
 97. Later Sir Marshall Clarke, British Resident in Basutoland, 1884-1893, and in Zululand 1893-1897. His role in the Langalibalele "Rebellion" seems to have escaped the notice of most historians, see J.O. Jackson, 'Recollections of the Langalibalele rebellion, K.C.A.L., n.d., p.8.
 98. BPP C-1191, Enclosure in no. 4, Pine to Kimberley, 8 April 1874.
 99. SNA 1/3/24, p.566, Lucas to Shepstone, 15 January 1874.
 100. SNA 1/3/24, pp.610-612, acting R.M. Ladysmith to Shepstone, 12 June 1874.

and in the press¹⁰¹, that the prisoners could be farmed out to work for whites or for the administration. Possibly in reaction to these suggestions the Legislative Council passed an Act in early April, on Pine's recommendation, enabling the Government to assign prisoners as servants to private individuals, or companies or corporations¹⁰². During the early months of 1874, 353 Hlubi of both sexes were put into employment in Pietermaritzburg and 179 in the Weenen district, of whom 124 were resident on the farms of B. Wilkes, R. Ralph and J. Bernard, prominent farmers in the district¹⁰³. In January the Estcourt correspondent of the *Witness* reported how the white inhabitants of the area hoped the "labor [problem] will progress remarkably, after the great importation of 'slaves', Langalibalelians and Putinians"¹⁰⁴.

Pine was also quick to implement his plan of "re-peopling" the Hlubi and Ngwe locations as outlined in his dispatch to Kimberley in late November. In mid-December he instructed J. Fannin, to "forward as much topographical information [on the location] as possible and to... select grants of 2000 acres each for white settlers"¹⁰⁵. Pine called for applications to be made in writing to his office at the same time. Records reveal that 160 applications were lodged by whites, most of them in late 1873 and early 1874. The largest proportion of these applications came from people in the immediate vicinity (Weenen, Estcourt or Bushman's River), but some were received from as far afield as the O.F.S. Seventeen applications named specific areas in the location that the individuals most desired, the most coveted area being that round Emphangweni and Bhekuzulu. Most of the successful Weenen county farmers applied, some asking for land contiguous to their existing farms. J. Bernard and members of the Wilkes, Cook, Gray and Woods families all applied, as did J. MacFarlane himself, who applied for a grant on behalf

101. Natal Mercury, 27 November 1873.
 102. GG 1874, p.64, Law no. 18, 15 January 1874.
 103. BPP C-1187, Enclosure 3 in no. 4, Pine to Carnarvon, 22 February 1875.
 104. Natal Witness, 27 January 1874.
 105. N. Fannin, *The Fannin Papers* (Durban, 1932), p.14.

of his son¹⁰⁶.

Cattle and horses captured from the Ngwe and Hlubi were auctioned off at sales held as early as late December in Pietermaritzburg and the northern districts. The revenue raised was set aside to defray the costs of the military expedition. The settlers were keen to buy the captured stock. Lucas wrote to Allison pointing out that:

My men under Corbutt don't know there is to be a sale of captured stock at Lidgetton on the 6th (January) prox. or they would not care to go to P.M.Burg in charge of Langalibalele¹⁰⁷.

In January the *Colonist* reported that sales in Estcourt were well attended and high prices were fetched¹⁰⁸. In May the Estcourt correspondent from the *Witness* reported that:

The cattle and pony sale was held here by Mr. J.D. Halliday, and a very middling lot was sold rapidly and at good prices. The attendance was very good. During the sale it was amusing to hear the remarks made on the ground. 'I say, says one, 'whose lot is this? Langalibalele's or Putini's'¹⁰⁹.

The following table shows the amounts realised from the sale of property confiscated from the Hlubi and Ngwe¹¹⁰.

- 106. CSO vol. 1910, Applications are dispersed throughout the volume.
- 107. Allison Papers, Lucas to Allison, 26 December 1873.
- 108. *Natal Colonist*, 3 January 1874.
- 109. *Natal Witness*, 1 May 1874.
- 110. BPP C-1187, Enclosure 4 in no. 4, Pine to Carnarvon, 22 February 1875.

	£	S.	D.
Cattle, horses, sheep, goats	24,558	17	6
Mealies and Kafir corn	810	16	0
Hides	72	0	0
Other property	37	1	3
Cash	16	5	0
TOTAL	£25,525	0	0

This sum does not include the cattle given to Molapo for capturing Langelibalele (2,000 in number)¹¹¹ or property carried away by the African levies.

In retrospect what is particularly striking about these appropriations is the remarkable alacrity with which the colonists moved to seize the land, labour and considerable wealth of the Hlubi and Ngwe, and the complaisant attitude of the Government in allowing this to happen.

Before finally turning to consider the fate of Langelibalele and his followers who had been captured in Basutoland, mention must be made of the individual groups of Hlubi and Ngwe which avoided capture. These groups were afraid of surrendering to the Natal authorities and existed in an uneasy world of robbery and deception. According to the *Witness*, in the early months of 1874 Mabuhle and his small band of followers spent their time between the O.F.S., Basutoland and Natal, living off what they could plunder¹¹². Details of their movements are scarce, although it was later reported that Mabuhle escaped to the Zulu kingdom and permanently avoided capture¹¹³. A group of the Ngwe, which had evaded capture by hiding out in caves, marauded

111. Herd, *Bent Pine*, p.45.
 112. *Natal Witness*, 5 May 1874.
 113. Herd, *Bent Pine*, p.45.

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their former location and were responsible for an attack on a white farmer, D. Gray, at Cathkin¹¹⁴. Neizel reported the death of many people in the Ngwe location, including his own wife and two children, from a disease (probably enteric) which infected the district¹¹⁵. Another victim of the disease was Umbalo who died in prison in Pietermaritzburg in early March 1874¹¹⁶.

The Natal government then had to decide what course of action was to be pursued. By breaking-up the Hlubi and deposing their chief, Pine had already inflicted the maximum penalty permissible under Native law¹¹⁷. The governor apparently desired to impose a punishment on Langalibalele that would re-assert the authority of the "Supreme chief" and keep the Hlubi a weak, divided and leaderless people.

Significantly the Government moved extremely quickly to bring Langalibalele to trial. In January a "Supreme Chief's Court" was formed to try Langalibalele, some of his sons, and one of his *indunas*. They were charged with "treason" for having failed to obey the summons of the authorities and with "rebellion" by having left the colony without permission¹¹⁸. The anomalies and irregularities in the composition of the court and the conduct of the trial have been thoroughly examined elsewhere¹¹⁹. They can be summarised under three headings.

Firstly Langalibalele was tried under a combination of native law and criminal law where he "enjoyed none of the advantages and suffered many of the disadvantages of both systems"¹²⁰. Secondly he was allowed no counsel until the third day of the trial, which lasted six days in all. Thirdly the composition of the court was "not conducive

114. Missionsberichte 1874, pp.469-470.
 115. Ibid., p.223.
 116. BPP C-1141, p.119.
 117. Herd, Bent Pine, p.49.
 118. BPP C-1025, no. 45, Pine to Kimberley, 16 February 1874.
 119. Colenso, BPP C-1141; Guest, Crisis in Natal, (Ch.V.); Welsh, Roots of Segregation (Ch.8); Herd, Bent Pine (Ch. IV-VI); Brookes and Webb, History of Natal (Ch. XII); J. Riekert, 'The State and the Law: the trial of Langalibalele', Paper presented at a Southern African Studies seminar, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1979.
 120. Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.57.

to a spirit of impartiality"¹²¹. On the Bench were seven members of the Executive Council, including Shepstone, Major Erskine who had lost a son at the Bushman's River Pass skirmish, six government-appointed *indunas* and chiefs, and three magistrates. John Shepstone, magistrate of Umvoti county, the man who had led the expedition against Matshana in 1858, was prosecutor.

Presiding over the trial was Pine himself. Thus the Lieutenant-Governor was directly responsible for the formal declaration of outlawing Langalibalele, for leading the military expedition against him and for presiding over the court which tried him. With hindsight it is difficult to see how Pine hoped to keep the gross irregularities in the composition of the court and the procedure used at the trial from the critical attention of his superiors. It seems that he must have placed great store by the advice and support of Shepstone, the one man who had the experience and confidence to follow such a course of action. Riekert has shown that the interpretation of customary law in Natal had been almost totally decided by Shepstone, and that some of the anomalies in the trial arose as a result of Shepstone's misinterpretation of Zulu customary law¹²². It also seems probable that Pine and Shepstone believed that the punishment of the Hlubi and Ngwe could be accomplished with as few repercussions as the breaking up of Matshana's and Sidoyi's people in the 1850's.

That Pine did not feel that his actions against the Hlubi would be fundamentally challenged either in Natal or Britain is suggested also by the nature of the punishment imposed on the Hlubi chief. On 9 February Langalibalele was found guilty on both charges of "treason" and "rebellion" and was sentenced to deportation

121. Ibid.
122. Riekert, 'The State and law', pp.9-12.

their former location and were responsible for the...
in the year 1858, including the...
a disease (possibly cholera) which...
victim of the disease was...
in early March 1858.

The Natal Government...
was to be...
Pine had already indicated the...
law. The...
Langalibalele...
and took the... and... people.

Initially the Government...
before Langalibalele...
formed to try Langalibalele...
they were charged with "treason"...
of the... and...
without...
opposition of the...
thoroughly examined... They can be...
evidence.

Initially Langalibalele was...
native law and...
and... of the...
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for life to Robben Island. This sentence was unknown in Customary law,¹²³ and under Native law Pine did not have the authority to banish Africans¹²³. In three subsequent trials, seven of Langalibalele's sons, two more of his principal *indunas* and 200 Hlubi commoners were convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from six months to seven years. One son was sentenced to five years banishment along with his father¹²⁴.

Pine then hurried to the Cape in order to make arrangements with the Cape authorities for Langalibalele's imprisonment on Robben Island¹²⁵. Early in July 1874, the Cape parliament "obligingly passed the 'Natal Criminals Act' to provide for Langalibalele's reception and detention on Robben Island"¹²⁶.

By the end of February the Hlubi and Ngwe had been broken up and dispossessed of their wealth. Langalibalele, the focal point around whom the Hlubi might be expected to try and rally, was about to be deported to the Cape. The Natal officials must have thought that the affair was over and could now be forgotten. That the incident was not quickly buried was due to the intervention of personalities whose actions will be discussed in the following chapter.

123. Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.141; Herd, *Bent Pine*, p.49.
 124. BPP C-1121, p.15, Pine to Carnarvon, 16 July 1874.
 125. GH 1218, no. 130, Pine to Carnarvon, 2 June 1874.
 126. Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, p.62.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE TRIUMPH OF SETTLER INTERESTS, 1874 - 1877

It was Bishop Colenso who was primarily responsible for the fact that the Langalibalele "affair" did not fade into historical obscurity. Colenso had arrived in Natal in 1854 and had shown a particular interest in missionary work among the Black population of Natal and Zululand. Although a firm friend of Shepstone's, his theological views and broad-minded attitude towards missionary work earned him many critics among the whites of Natal.

Colenso had begun to voice publicly his opposition to the conduct of the volunteers and African levies from as early as the 2 January 1874¹. He also pointed out in the Press, in mid-January, at the height of colonial elation over Langalibalele's capture, that it had yet to be proved that a rebellion had taken place². Once the irregularities of the trial became known to him he began to actively defend Langalibalele and publicly condemned Pine's conduct during the trial of the Hlubi chief. He began to prepare an argument on Langalibalele's behalf, organised for two Hlubi elders to present a petition to Pine requesting a rehearing of the case, visited and interviewed Langalibalele in prison in April, and in June briefed Goodricke, Senior Advocate at the Natal Bar, to conduct an appeal.³

This appeal was however rejected by the Executive Council on the 13 July. Colenso applied for an interdict from the Supreme Court to prevent the sentence from being carried out, but this too was unsuccessful. The Bishop was still not beaten and he printed a pamphlet in defence of the Hlubi chief which was sent to the new Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Carnarvon⁴.

1. Natal Witness, 2 January 1874.
2. Natal Colonist, 12 January 1874.
3. Guest, Crisis in Natal; p.61, M.A. Hooker, 'The place of Bishop J.W. Colenso in the history of South Africa', vol. 2, (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Rand, 1954), pp.65-68.
4. Carnarvon replaced Kimberley in February 1874.

In Britain the Colonial Office had already received a "hostile" communication from the Anti-slavery Society concerning the conduct of the colonial forces during the military expedition in November-December 1873⁵. In April Carnarvon wrote to Pine indicating his concern with "the alleged seizure of women and children and their apprenticeship in different parts of the country"⁶. On 13 April, after receiving Pine's account of the trial of Langalibalele, he wrote back criticising the severity of the sentence and the fact that the prisoner was not allowed to be defended by Council⁷. Two days later he wrote again expressing reservations about Pine's proposals to re-settle whites in the former locations of the Hlubi and Ngwe⁸. Pine's only response to these despatches was to issue a general amnesty, on 2 May, to Hlubi and Ngwe groups who were still at large. Colenso's pamphlet in defence of Langalibalele should have given Carnarvon sufficient evidence to revoke the sentence against him and to review all the measures that had been taken by the Natal Government in respect of the Hlubi and Ngwe since November 1873.

However Carnarvon did not follow this course. According to Etherington he was "justifiably outraged by the reports from Natal but uncertain about the course he should follow"⁹. There were two factors which restrained Carnarvon from directly censuring the Natal Government and taking immediate steps to mitigate the severity of the conditions under which the Hlubi were forced to live. The first of these restraining factors was apparent in the first half of 1874 and the second became so in the latter half.

Carnarvon, initially, began to realise that he could turn the Langalibalele "incident" to his advantage in furthering his plans for a confederation of British states in South Africa. He had cherished the idea of a federal system in South Africa from before the time that he became Colonial Secretary and the obvious mishandling of the Langalibalele "incident" by the Natal Government offered the argument that the colony

5. BPP C-1025, no. 22, Anti-Slavery Society to Colonial Office, 20 January 1874.
 6. BPP C-1025, no. 47, Carnarvon to Pine, 7 April 1874.
 7. BPP C-1025, no. 50, Carnarvon to Pine, 13 April 1874.
 8. BPP C-1025, no. 52, Carnarvon to Pine, 15 April 1874.
 9. Etherington, 'Labour supply and the South African confederation, p.246.

could not manage its own affairs. By forcing Natal to accept a return to quasi-Crown colony rule there would be "one less self-willed legislature to treat with on the subject of federation"¹⁰.

Goodfellow suggests that this attempt to draw South Africa into a confederation was largely the result of Carnarvon's own initiative¹¹. Benyon however has placed the beginnings of British imperial intervention from the time of Sir Harry Smith in 1848, from which time the "powers" of the British High Commission were extended by a "series of masterful Cape Governors"¹². Atmore and Marks have viewed Carnarvon's intervention as being related to the growth of the capitalist economy in South Africa after the discovery of diamonds in 1867¹³.

The origins of the confederation policy aside, Carnarvon had to tread warily in his plans to use the incompetence of Natal's officials to govern the colony as a lever to promote his confederal policy. The English public was becoming informed, during the first half of 1874, of Colenso's efforts to ensure a fair trial for Langalibalele and of the violence perpetrated against the Hlubi and Nwe. Reports and comments by the Peace Society, the Aborigines Protection Society and the Liberal Press pressured Carnarvon to intervene on Langalibalele's behalf¹⁴. On the other hand Carnarvon did not want to alienate settler opinion in Natal and the Cape because it would be extremely difficult to obtain the co-operation of these administrations in his plans for federation. This was particularly true of the Cape which had only recently secured

10. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, p.117.
 11. C.F. Goodfellow, Great Britain and South African Confederation 1870-1881 (Cape Town, 1966), pp.210-211.
 12. J.A. Benyon, 'The High Commissioner as representative of British power in the era of containment, confrontation and concession in South Africa', (unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of South Africa, 1977), p.4.
 13. A. Atmore and S. Marks, 'The imperial factor in South Africa in the nineteenth century: towards a reassessment', in E.F. Penrose (ed.), European Imperialism and the Partition of Africa (London, 1975), pp105-132.
 14. G.W. Cox, The Life of John William Colenso - Bishop of Natal, vol. II (London, 1888) pp.401-402.

the status of 'responsible' government¹⁵.

In June Carnarvon instructed Pine to make provision for the liberation of Hlubi and Ngwe prisoners and warned the Lieutenant-Governor against proceeding with the banishment of Langalibalele. He also disallowed the clause in Law 18 (to "make Special Provision with regard to the Employment of Convicts") which provided for the assignment of Hlubi prisoners to private individuals¹⁶. But this was the limit of Carnarvon's intervention. It seems that he sensed that any further moves might antagonise the Natal Government to the point that it would refuse to co-operate in his confederation scheme. Having moved thus far Carnarvon stopped to review the reports of the Natal Government and Colenso's pamphlet in defence of Langalibalele. He also conferred with Disraeli, the Prime Minister, and awaited the arrival, in early September, of Shepstone and Colenso, who "hurried to London as spokesmen for the two opposing points of view in Natal"¹⁷.

Etherington has shown that Shepstone, in a series of meetings with Carnarvon in London, convinced the Colonial Secretary that a policy of confederation should be pursued in order to expand British dominion in southern and east Africa in order to ensure that the African hinterland would provide a permanent and regular supply of labour for the developing colonies of south Africa.¹⁸ Shepstone's scheme provided a sound economic basis for Carnarvon's confederation plans. However it further constrained him from taking steps to ameliorate the conditions under which the Hlubi were living, for his reliance on Shepstone to carry through his confederation policy would have made it virtually impossible for him to intervene in the running of Shepstone's own department in Natal. Colenso correctly perceived Carnarvon's position when he later accused him of "sacrificing justice to the Hlubi to the 'mere policy' of confederation"¹⁹.

15. Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, p.65.
16. BPP C-1191, no. 6, Carnarvon to Pine, 12 June 1874.
17. Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, pp.65-66.
18. Etherington, 'Labour supply and the South African confederation', pp.248-253.
19. Ibid. p.248.

However the current of opinion against the Natal authorities had swelled with the arrival of Colenso in England. On the day of his arrival he had a meeting with the *Times* correspondent and the object of his visit was immediately made known to the public. Within a week his manuscript in defence of Langalibalele had been printed and he had received public messages of support from the Queen and the Aborigines Protection Society²⁰.

Under these circumstances Carnarvon was obliged to intervene again. It was evident that he decided to hold Pine responsible for the whole affair. In a lengthy despatch Carnarvon criticised Pine for his handling of the Langalibalele crisis, and pointed out contradictions in Pine's attempts to vindicate the Government's actions against the Hlubi and Ngwe. Carnarvon did not fully pardon the Hlubi as such a measure would undoubtedly have antagonised the colonists to a point where he could not have counted on their support. He instructed Pine to take every step to:

obviate the hardships and mitigate the severities which ... have far exceeded the limits of justice. Not only should the terms of the amnesty of 2nd May last be scrupulously obeyed but ... means should be provided by which the members of the tribe may be enabled to re-establish themselves in settled occupations²¹.

It appears that the amnesty of 2 May to which Carnarvon referred was simply a gesture on the part of the British Government. The majority of Hlubi by this time had been captured and punished and those few still uncaptured did not constitute a threat to the security of the colony as a whole. While Carnarvon's despatch unequivocally censured Pine for his conduct in the entire affair, his instructions regarding the Hlubi and Ngwe were vague. It is probable that this was an intentional move by Carnarvon to provide Pine with an excuse not to act on behalf of the

20. Hooker, 'Bishop Colenso in the history of South Africa,' pp.73-74; Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, p.64.
 21. BPP C-1121, no. 26, Carnarvon to Pine, 3 December 1874.

22. Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, p.64.
 23. BPP C-1121, no. 26, Carnarvon to Pine, 3 Dec 1874.
 24. Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, p.64.
 25. Carnarvon to Pine, 3 Dec 1874, BPP C-1121, no. 26.
 26. Ibid. p. 118.

Hlubi and Ngwe and, accordingly, partially to pacify colonial opinion in Natal and the Cape.

In this same despatch Carnarvon also announced that changes were to be made in the form of Executive government and in the handling of "native" affairs. A new governor was needed to implement these changes and Pine was recalled and his retirement advised²². Pine was thus made a scapegoat for what W. Brooks, Natal's Superintendent of Education at the time, called "the most wonderful case of blunders that I can conceive possible for men past infancy to have made"²³. By recalling Pine and retaining Shepstone, Carnarvon went some way towards meeting the criticisms of his detractors and yet did not fully alienate himself from the Natal colonists. A man of forceful character was needed to replace Pine and to bring to fruition Carnarvon's plans for confederation by revising Natal's constitution and "native" policy. Such a man was to be Sir Garnet Wolseley.

In order to understand the import of Carnarvon's instructions with regard to the Hlubi and Ngwe it is essential to trace their fortunes from the middle of 1874. If Colenso was largely responsible for attempting to gain justice for Hlubi, it was Durnford who vigorously took up the case for re-habilitation of the Ngwe before full reparation was ordered by Carnarvon. In December 1873, the Legislative Council had debated the idea of a project to blow up passes in the Drakensberg, a measure which would supposedly prevent the easy exit of Natal Africans from the colony and offer security from raids from over the mountain range. In May 1874 Durnford capitalised on this idea, and in his capacity as colonial engineer, obtained permission to engage 90 men of the Ngwe to help him blow up these passes. Shepstone readily consented to Durnford's plan. In a letter to Allison he privately confessed that Durnford's proposal "seemed to promise a means of escape"²⁵. It seems as though Shepstone may have sensed that the growing indignation of the British public over the treatment of the Ngwe could have serious repercussions for the Natal authorities. Despite being met with panic

22. BPP C-1121, no. 27,28, Carnarvon to Pine, 3 December, 1874.
23. Quoted in Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.63, from Goodericke Papers, file 20, W. Brooks to Goodericke, 26 June 1874.
24. GG vol. 10, 1872-1874, Votes and Proceedings, Debates of 26, 27 December 1873.
25. Allison Papers, Shepstone to Allison, 25 May 1874.

and prejudice from the whites in Estcourt, Durnford managed to get the 90 Ngwe to work throughout June and July under gruelling winter conditions. Eventually he even gained support from local whites for this "bold stroke of policy"²⁶. On his return to Pietermaritzburg in late July he spent five days inducing an indecisive Pine to reach a decision in favour of pardoning the Ngwe. On 3 August Pine, in response to Durnford's urgings and Carnarvon's despatch of 12 June, informed the Colonial Secretary that he intended to mitigate the punishment meted out to the Ngwe, though he would not allow them to return to the location under their own chief. On 11 August he publicly absolved the Ngwe from any complicity in the "Langalibalele affair"²⁷.

Durnford rightly suspected that this vaguely worded declaration would not be followed up by any practical efforts to alleviate the condition of the Ngwe. Under the terms of the pardon the Ngwe were allowed to return to their location and Durnford, in his private capacity, set about tracing members of the Ngwe (on white farms or with other African groups) and supervising their return to the location. However he discovered that the new superintendent to the locations, W.D. Wheelwright, who had been appointed in April to ensure that no Hlubi or Ngwe returned to "plunder" from their locations, was forbidding the 90 men who had assisted Durnford to return to the location²⁸. Wheelwright was in fact acting on a specific instruction from the acting S.N.A., John Shepstone²⁹. John Shepstone was away for a month making it impossible for Durnford to resolve the issue of the returning Ngwe. On his return however, Durnford managed, with difficulty, to obtain from the S.N.A. a specific order allowing the Ngwe to return to their location, which he immediately presented to Wheelwright³⁰. This success was given emphasis in late September by a despatch from Carnarvon, who, prompted by complaints by Colenso in London, ordered Pine to carry out his intentions of 3 August with "scrupulous fidelity"³¹.

26. J. St. C. Man, 'Colonel Anthony William Durnford in the history of Natal and Zululand, 1873-1879', (unpublished B.A. Hons. thesis, University of Natal, 1970), p.22.
 27. BPP C-1221, no. 8, Pine to Carnarvon, 3 August 1874; Man, 'Durnford in the history of Natal', p.23.
 28. Man, 'Durnford in the history of Natal', p.24.
 29. SNA 1/1/24, no. 176, J. Shepstone to Wheelwright, 15 August 1874.
 30. Man, 'Durnford in the history of Natal', p.25.
 31. BPP C-1121, no. 21, Carnarvon to Pine, 26 September 1874.

However, Carnarvon's orders were not received in Natal until early in December, during which time Natal's officials impeded the return of some of the Ngwe to their location. In mid-October, Colenso, recently arrived in London, wrote to Carnarvon telling him that he had received information from Durnford that Wheelwright, based in Estcourt, was giving preference to those members of the Ngwe who intended to work on the farms of white men in the vicinity of the location³².

Of a group of 411 Ngwe who left Pietermaritzburg in October, 116 settled on private farms³³, but whether this number can be taken as an indication of the proportion which sought employment, voluntarily or in response to Wheelwright's orders, is impossible to determine. Similarly, possibly not all people wanted to return to the location; others may have chosen to return to their homesteads on private, unoccupied land as tenants. As the Ngwe had no chief, following Umbalo's death earlier in the year, and as the administration had specifically forbidden the Ngwe to re-form around a successor to Umbalo, some of the younger men may have taken the opportunity to move away from the location entirely.

Conditions in their location towards the end of 1874 were extremely disorderly, as Durnford discovered when he visited it in late October 1874. No restitution of the basic requirements for their existence had been made. The people were without cattle, crops, housing or clothing³⁴. During the first half of 1874 "loyal" Africans had been allowed by Pine to settle in the Ngwe location. The number that entered and where they originated from is not clear from available evidence. However in his annual report for 1874, Missionary Neizel stated that there was tension between them and the Ngwe who returned, and that a number of people had chosen to move onto white-owned farms rather than live with strangers. Fortunately the harvest of 1874 was good and Neizel reported that many Ngwe were obtaining mealies from the thornveld

32. BPP C-1121, no. 17, Colenso to Carnarvon, 16 October 1874.
 33. BPP C-1187, Enclosure in no. 2, J. Shepstone to Carnarvon, 21 December 1874.
 34. BPP C-1121, Enclosure 4 in no. 23, Colenso to Colonial office, 13 November 1874.

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35. BPP C-1121, no. 17, Colenso to Carnarvon, 16 October 1874.
 36. BPP C-1187, Enclosure in no. 2, J. Shepstone to Carnarvon, 21 December 1874.
 37. BPP C-1121, Enclosure 4 in no. 23, Colenso to Colonial office, 13 November 1874.
 38. BPP C-1121, no. 17, Colenso to Carnarvon, 16 October 1874.
 39. BPP C-1187, Enclosure in no. 2, J. Shepstone to Carnarvon, 21 December 1874.
 40. BPP C-1121, Enclosure 4 in no. 23, Colenso to Colonial office, 13 November 1874.
 41. BPP C-1121, no. 17, Colenso to Carnarvon, 16 October 1874.

country near Weenen³⁵. Had the harvest been poor, no doubt many more Nguni would have been forced into the labour market, making any form of re-grouping even more difficult.

The position of the Hlubi remained unaltered until near the end of 1874. Many of the men continued to be held as prisoners, or were assigned out to private employers, and the women and children had to continue living with Africans considered to be loyal and obedient to the Government. According to Harriet Colenso, the bishop's daughter, the women and children were generally treated kindly, though her observations were probably limited to the 200 odd Hlubi living with other Africans at Bishopstowe³⁶. In October, possibly reacting to Carnarvon's despatch of 12 June which clearly indicated his repugnance at some of the Natal Government's measures, particularly the assignment of Hlubi convicts to whites, Pine decided to release those Hlubi prisoners whose sentences did not exceed three years, and to allow them to live with their families on white-owned farms decided upon by John Shepstone. Shepstone was instructed by Pine to settle those people in areas well distanced from their former location³⁷.

At the same time as he released these convicted members of the Hlubi, Shepstone also allowed Hlubi women, children and old men who had been made to live with other African groups in Natal in December 1873 and January 1874, to leave their residences and settle on private lands. The purpose of this measure was patently to attempt to induce some of the Hlubi to seek employment with whites, as their former location was not open to habitation by members of the chiefdom. Whites who wanted Hlubi families on their farms had to promise to fulfil certain obligations regarding conditions of employment. For example they had to pay the Hlubi at the current rate of wages and initially had to supply food and clothing. White farmers responded wholeheartedly to this arrangement and "numerous applicants readily and gladly undertook to comply with the conditions"³⁸.

35. Missionsberichte 1875, Report for 1874, p.473.
36. W. Rees (ed.), Colenso Letters from Natal (Pietermaritzburg, 1958), p.275. H. Colenso to her grandmother, 4 January 1874.
37. SNA 1/6/8, no. 166, Pine to Shepstone, 15 October 1874.
38. BPP C-1187, p.4, Enclosure in no. 3, J. Shepstone to Carnarvon, 31 December 1874.

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35. Missionsberichte 1875, Report for 1874, p.473.
36. W. Rees (ed.), Colenso Letters from Natal (Pietermaritzburg, 1958), p.275. H. Colenso to her grandmother, 4 January 1874.
37. SNA 1/6/8, no. 166, Pine to Shepstone, 15 October 1874.
38. BPP C-1187, p.4, Enclosure in no. 3, J. Shepstone to Carnarvon, 31 December 1874.

By 8 December, according to information received by the *Witness*, thirteen whites had been allotted Hlubi families, while another 69 had submitted claims³⁹. In late December the Rev. J. Allison and the Colenso family were allowed to receive groups of Hlubi at Edendale and Bishopstowe respectively⁴⁰. How many people left the homes which they had been required to establish among African groups regarded as loyal to the Government and went to work is impossible to assess. It seems likely however that a significant number, deprived of their former land and property, would have had no alternative but to seek work among the colonists. The same would have been true of former Hlubi convicts, though a significant number, as will be seen from later evidence, managed to settle into their former pattern of agricultural production with other African groups in the midlands and northern districts of Natal.

By the end of 1874, after about a year of separation from their homes and families, most of the Hlubi were at last able to embark tentatively upon a reconstruction of their lives. However, even in late November, some Hlubi males continued to live in a state of insecurity near the Basutoland border. The acting magistrate of Ladysmith asked John Shepstone early in November for a contingent of Native Police to arrest Hlubi men who were crossing into Natal to fetch their wives. The magistrate reported that these men were able to move freely across the border with Basutoland despite the destruction of the Drakensberg passes by Durnford's contingent⁴¹. It had been reported earlier in the year by the *Witness* that these men refused to surrender to the Natal authorities either because they did not know about the amnesty of 2 May or because they treated it with suspicion⁴². This could have been the reason why some members of the chiefdom still continued to avoid contact with the colonial authorities.

Pine's detractors might have expected, after Carnarvon's despatch of 3 December, that he would take steps towards ameliorating the conditions under which most of the Hlubi were living. However the pressure on the Natal Government to act in this regard was not as great as it might appear. As has been mentioned, the despatch was inexplicit and did not

39. Natal Witness, 8 December 1874.
 40. SNA 1/7/7, pp.96-97, J. Shepstone to Pine, 31 December 1874.
 41. SNA 1/3/24, pp.676-678, acting R.M. Ladysmith to J. Shepstone, 11 November 1874.
 42. Natal Witness, 28 May 1874.

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Carnarvon's despatch, which laid down in general terms the direction of reform, and Shepstone's memoranda on which the proposed alterations to 'native' policy were based. The result was that in their final form the "changes of 'native' policy envisaged by Carnarvon never materialised"⁵¹.

Before discussing the reason for this it is necessary to examine the terms contained in the Native Administration Law as passed by the Legislative Council of 5 December 1875. The law abolished Ordinance 3 of 1849. All crimes and offences (except political offences and homicide or assault), were subject to prosecution in the ordinary Colonial courts. The Secretary for Native Affairs became the official Supreme Chief over Africans, a measure which "merely translated a *de facto* position into a *de jure* one"⁵². The Secretary of Native Affairs' judicial powers were curtailed in terms of the amendments passed by the Legislative Council. He was not allowed to be a member of the Native High Court, which was to try criminal cases involving Africans and to hear appeals from the location magistrates' courts. Disputes between chiefs or disputes arising out of succession to chieftainship were also to be resolved by the Native High Court and not by the magistrates. The Native High Court was to be presided over by an appointed judge who could call upon the Secretary of Native Affairs, or magistrates or chiefs to assist him. Finally provision was made in the act for the codification of customary law which would ultimately make the law less flexible⁵³.

Thus the limited jurisdiction of chiefs in criminal cases was to be removed and in addition chiefs had to furnish details of all civil cases in which they adjudicated to the Secretary for Native Affairs Department.

Despite the fact that some new legal principles were introduced into African administration, there was little that was new in the law. Chiefs still remained important props in the administrative structure. They appeared now to be more integrated with the administrative system

51. Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, p.78.
52. Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p.152.
53. *Ibid.*, pp.151-164 passim.

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and more reliant on the Government's support and favour. Colenso referred to the 'new' policy as "an expansion of the present system - more magistrates, schools, hospitals, but all under 'Native Law' with Mr. Shepstone as the sole expounder"⁵⁴. A chief was no longer in a position where he could exercise any independence from the white authorities. The new Law simply appeared to give legal basis for the kind of intervention into African affairs that Shepstone had exercised more and more over the past thirty years.

The terms of the new Native Administration law were criticised by J.W. Akerman in the Natal Legislative Council on the grounds that they still sanctioned "chieftainship with all its concomitant tribal association"⁵⁵. Opposition in the Council to the proposals was not great. The Natal Constitutional Amendment law had reduced the influence of what Etherington has termed the "up-country" party in the Council by equalising the number of elected and nominated members on it⁵⁶, and there were only three dissenting votes, from Akerman and the members for Klip river and Umvoti. However a large sector of colonist opinion was disappointed by the terms of the new Law, particularly in view of the opinions expressed earlier by Carnarvon. Colenso claimed that he was disillusioned with the law "as indeed as the colonists generally, though for very different reasons"⁵⁷, and Wolseley's successor, Lieutenant-Governor Sir Henry Bulwer, wrote to Carnarvon stating that many colonists had expected "distinct and well defined rules of policy" to have been fixed⁵⁸.

Consequently there appear to have been a number of anomalies about the introduction and passing of the Native Administration Bill. It met neither Carnarvon's apparent guidelines, nor the expectations of

54. Colenso, quoted from unacknowledged source in Transactions of the Aborigines Protection Society, p.263.
 55. Quoted in Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.157, from SNA 1/7/7, Report by T. Shepstone on J.W. Akerman's letter.
 56. Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.75.
 57. Ibid., quoted from Cox, Life of Colenso, vol. II, p.426.
 58. Cited in Welsh, Roots of Segregation, from GH 1219, Bulwer to Carnarvon, 14 February 1875.

Wolseley had only a minor role in the framing of the Native Administration Bill. He was content to follow Shepstone's advice and was anxious to avoid any far-reaching reform of 'native' policy. His sympathies appeared to lie with many of the colonists, and he was sharply critical of Colenso's and Durnford's close association with African chiefdoms in Natal⁶¹. It should be pointed out also that it would have been inconsistent for Wolseley to present a Bill that would have given control of African administration to settler groups after he had just achieved his objective in altering Natal's constitution "to overbalance the irresponsible up-country element"⁶².

Given Wolseley's conversion to the opinions of many of the colonists, and his desire to avoid a re-structuring of 'native' policy, it is not surprising that he should not wish to reverse fundamentally the Government's previous actions in regard to the Hlubi and Ngwe. His first move, significantly, was to adopt Pine's provisions for the locations of the two chiefdoms. In May 1875 he ordered Fanin, who had surveyed the two locations in December 1873, to present him with his findings so that a "belt" of white farms could be created between the locations⁶³. The exact size of the Ngwe location before 1873 was never accurately established but the new location (40,500 acres in size) was considered to be smaller than the original area⁶⁴. The Hlubi location was reduced in size by 33,000 acres by Wolseley's establishment of the belt of farms between them and the Ngwe⁶⁵. Wolseley also followed Pine's plan of keeping the Hlubi and Ngwe in the locations under strict control. Wheelwright, the former "supervisor" of the locations was appointed magistrate in June 1875, and the Hlubi and Ngwe were to be placed under "Headmen who owe their elevation to the Government"⁶⁶. Welsh has noted the frequency with which, after 1875, headmen appointed by the administration were placed in control over fragmented chiefdoms⁶⁷. The Hlubi and Ngwe seem to

61. A. Preston (ed.), The South African Diaries of Sir Garnet Wolseley, 1875 (Cape Town, 1971), pp.128-129; De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p.46.
 62. Etherington, 'Labour supply and South African confederation', p.252.
 63. BPP C-1342, no. 27, Wolseley to Carnarvon, 17 May 1875.
 64. NBB, vol. III, Report of a Committee to consider the Best Method of Employing the Putile Fund, 1877, p.53.
 65. BPP C-1342, no. 27, Wolseley to Carnarvon, 17 May 1875.
 66. Preston (ed.), Wolseley's Diaries entry for 22 June 1875, p.199; SNA 1/7/7, minute by T. Shepstone, 18 October 1875.
 67. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, pp.273-275.

have been the first groups to have fallen prey to this policy after 1875, though it should be remembered that Shepstone had been concerned with keeping African chiefdoms as small as possible before this date. One of the most important effects of the Native Administration Law of 1875 was to allow Shepstone to exercise greater power over the internal affairs of African chiefdoms. The smaller and more fragmented they were, the easier it was for him to do this. This fact seems to account for the increase in the number of officially recognised "tribes" in Natal after 1875.

That Wolseley's views were in accord with those of many of the colonists is frequently reflected in his correspondence with Carnarvon. For example he wrote to Carnarvon in May 1875 stating that the Africans in Natal were still capable of becoming "a very dangerous element in the colony" and it was necessary "to rule the Kafirs not only with justice, but with the utmost firmness, and to make them believe in our strength"⁶⁸. Consequently he decided to compensate the Ngwe in sheep and agricultural implements rather than cattle because "owners of large flocks of sheep cannot go to war with the same ease to themselves as when their property consists of cattle"⁶⁹. This was a calculated move to keep the Ngwe economically depressed and socially disordered. Among Natal Africans, cattle were still an important medium of exchange and a store of wealth. Cattle still underpinned the *lobolo* system and were an index of social standing. By refusing in principle to compensate the Ngwe in cattle, Wolseley made it extremely difficult for them to continue to follow their "traditional" pattern of economic dependence. However before he left Natal in August 1875, Wolseley changed his mind, for reasons which are not apparent, and distributed 900 head of cattle to the Ngwe. Even so this by no means matched the quantity confiscated, which approximated 5,000. Most of the compensation was given in the form of sheep, agricultural implements and blankets. From information gleaned from the Natal Treasury, Wolseley estimated that the amount realised from the sale of Ngwe property was £12,000. This sum was to be spent on compensation over four years at a rate of £3,000 a year⁷⁰. Before this 'Putile Fund', as it was called, could be utilised, it was necessary for Wolseley to

68. GH 280, pp.80-84, Wolseley to Carnarvon, 12 May 1875.
 69. BPP C-1342, Enclosure in no. 3, Wolseley to Carnarvon, 7 May 1875.
 70. BPP C-1342, Enclosure in b, no. 23, Wolseley to Carnarvon 7 May 1875; BPP C-1401, Wolseley to Carnarvon, 17 August 1875.

deal with Durnford and Colenso, who had taken the matter of compensation for the Ngwe into their own hands, and the Legislative Council, which was loathe to compensate the Ngwe in any form whatsoever.

As colonial engineer, Durnford was a public servant, but he had no control over the making of policy toward the Hlubi and Ngwe. Wolseley strongly resented his support for Colenso, and the fact that Durnford "devoted his time and purse freely" to the Ngwe⁷¹. Durnford and Colenso attempted to gather funds from members of the Ngwe in order to start a personal land trust for the chiefdom. This was consistent with Durnford's and Colenso's policy of attempting to constitute the Ngwe as owners of private property. Wheelwright complained about the collection of money without his knowledge to Wolseley, who in turn instructed Durnford not to act independently of his (Wolseley's) instructions⁷². Wolseley consequently saw him and Colenso as trouble-makers pursuing "promiscuous contact" with the Ngwe and Hlubi. Moreover Wolseley's objective was to win over the Natal colonists to an acceptance of Carnarvon's federation plans, and to show sympathy for men as unpopular as Durnford and Colenso would jeopardise his chances of success. In late June Wolseley effectively disposed of Durnford by sending to England for a replacement for him as colonial engineer, the civil position Durnford had held for over a year⁷³. This was preceded by a stinging rebuke, designed to serve as a warning to Colenso as well not to "mix [themselves] up in native affairs"⁷⁴.

Initially the Legislative Council opposed Wolseley's plan to allocate £12,000 compensation to the Ngwe, demanding that a portion be spent on expenses incurred during the military action against the two chiefdoms. Only in July 1875 did the Council reluctantly agree to sanction the spending of this money⁷⁵. By the time Wolseley left Natal in August he had created the legislation whereby the Ngwe could be compensated, and he had spent £2,230 of the annual allotment of £3,000 on cattle (900 head), sheep, blankets. He had also set aside £500 for *ad hoc* payments payable to members of the Ngwe on recommendations from

71. Preston (ed.), *Wolseley's Diaries*, entry for 3 April 1875, p.159.
72. GH 1635, unnumbered minute by Wolseley, 3 June 1875.
73. Man, 'Durnford in the history of Natal', p.32.
74. GH 1635, unnumbered minute by Wolseley, 1 June 1875.
75. Herd, *Bent Pine*, p.121.

GH 1635, unnumbered minute by Wolseley, 3 June 1875.
Man, 'Durnford in the history of Natal', p.32.
Herd, *Bent Pine*, p.121.

magistrates⁷⁶.

Before considering how the 'Putile Fund' was spent after Wolseley's departure it is important to look at the position of the Hlubi. While Wolseley was under obligation to carry through Carnarvon's order of 3 December 1874, that the Ngwe should "be reinstated without delay", he was not bound to act in the same way towards the Hlubi, who had been neither pardoned nor specifically ordered compensation. During the latter half of 1875 the Hlubi remained largely forgotten by the British and Natal Governments.

Although many members of the chiefdom, after their release from prison in Pietermaritzburg in February and March 1875, had been reported as leaving for the Weenen district, not all returned to the location, for the acting magistrate at Weenen, J. Mellersh, reported that, in his opinion, the majority of those returning settled with other Hlubi families on private lands outside the location⁷⁷. Whether these people settled there out of choice or necessity is impossible to ascertain. Given the facts that the location was reduced in size, that "loyal" Africans from other groups had been allowed to settle in the location, and that Shepstone had ordered Wheelwright to place the returning Hlubi under "Headmen who owe their elevation to the Government", it seems likely that many of the Hlubi who had previously lived in the location would have chosen to settle on privately-owned land rather than in the location. A crucial point was that the Hlubi had no cattle after the Government sales of their captured herds, nor did they receive financial compensation. In order to obtain cattle they would have to earn the money with which to buy them. It is probable that many of those who settled with Hlubi families on private lands did so out of necessity. Thus Pine's original aim of providing the newly-created farms in the Hlubi and Ngwe locations with an ample supply of Black labour⁷⁸ was, in fact, achieved. Despite the intervention of the British Government, the white farmers of Weenen

76. Rees (ed.), Colenso Letters, F. Colenso to Mrs. Lyall, 15 July 1875, p. 317; BPP C-1401, Wolseley to Carnarvon, 17 August 1875.
77. GH 1635, memorandum of Sir G. Wolseley, Enclosure in R.M. Newcastle to Shepstone, 19 May 1875.
78. BPP C-1025, no. 46, Pine to Kimberley, 26 February 1874.

County still procured the resources of land and labour which they had desired in the late 1860's and early in the 1870's.

The Aborigines Protection Society, acting on information received from Colenso, objected in November 1875 to the pattern of Hlubi settlement on white-owned land, suggesting that they would have preferred to reside in their former location. Shepstone replied that their complaint stemmed from an "imperfect acquaintance with... the wishes of the Amahlubi people"⁷⁹. Neither of these contradictory statements are right. Some Hlubi may indeed have wished not to return to the location but rather to establish themselves as peasant producers or wage-earners on white-owned land, while large numbers may have been compelled to sell their labour, at least temporarily.

Carnarvon's orders of 3 December 1874 had suggested that some form of relief be given to the Hlubi to tide them over until such time as they could earn money or establish themselves as agricultural producers. This was followed by a statement by Shepstone in July 1874 that he intended to restore some Hlubi cattle to their owners⁸⁰. Save for the dispensing of food rations to some Hlubi prisoners after they left gaol in Pietermaritzburg⁸¹, there is no evidence to suggest that the Hlubi were given any relief. In September 1875 the *Witness* asserted that compensation for the Hlubi was simply a "fiction" and that "neither in spirit nor in letter have Lord Carnarvon's orders been obeyed"⁸². Despite the *Witness*'s implication that Carnarvon had given direct orders, it seems that the vagueness of Carnarvon's orders was again the reason why Natal's officials could avoid their implementation. In addition to this, it seems unlikely that Shepstone would have assisted the Hlubi in view of his intention after 1875 to reduce the size and strength of African chiefdoms in order to make them easier to govern. The evidence suggests that in 1873 and 1874, ten thousand people were effectively stripped of their wealth and in most cases, of their land, without receiving

79. SNA 1/7/7, reports, August 1873 - November 1876, observations by Shepstone on the Aborigines Protection Society's letter to Carnarvon of 4 November 1875.
80. SNA 1/6/8, no. 20, memorandum by T. Shepstone, 13 July 1874.
81. BPP C-1342, Enclosure in no. 23, Wolseley to Carnarvon, 7 May 1875.
82. Natal *Witness*, 3 September 1875.

anything beyond token compensation in return.

Significantly many of the Hlubi who fled from Natal at the end of 1873 chose not to return to the colony. By the middle of 1875 most of these people had settled with the remnants of the original pre-Difaqane Hlubi chiefdom in the O.F.S. and Basutoland. For example the R.M. of Newcastle, W. Beaumont, reported in May 1875 that a group of over 200 Hlubi was living near Harrismith⁸³. Major Bell, magistrate at Leribe, informed Shepstone in June that "large numbers (of the Hlubi), mostly living with their relatives", were in Basutoland⁸⁴. Individual Boer families in the O.F.S. in the same month reported the presence of Hlubi on their farms who showed no desire to return to Natal⁸⁵. It was widely held by Hlubi in the O.F.S. that if they returned to Natal they would be obliged to work for three years which was a reason not to return⁸⁶. All these reports (except Bell's) denote that these people were labourers on farms or towns (for example Harrismith). Many men were also employed on the diamond fields⁸⁷. Some of these Hlubi who left Natal permanently may have had reasons for preferring to remain outside Natal. However it seems reasonable to assume that the harsh economic conditions under which they would have been forced to live in Natal prompted some of them not to return.

Although the *Witness* had reported that a large number of Hlubi appeared to return to Veenen County, magistrates' reports for 1875-1876 reveal that many of them remained in the chiefdoms to which they had been allotted in early 1874. Some were with the Thembu and Chunu near Estcourt, 121 were reported as living near Ladysmith, and others were living in the Umgeni and upper Tugela divisions of Natal⁸⁸.

- 83. GH 1635, no. 62, R.M. Newcastle to Shepstone, 19 May 1875.
- 84. GH 1635, no. 66, Bell to Shepstone, 27 June 1875.
- 85. GH 1635, no. 70, letter from Uys to Capt. Allison appended with Allison to Shepstone, 19 July 1875.
- 86. *Ibid.*
- 87. GH 1635, no. 64, R.M. Ladysmith to Shepstone, 20 May 1875.
- 88. SNA 1/6/6, reports on border disturbances and native locations, 1865-1876; magistrates reports 1875-1876, Fynn to Shepstone, unnumbered, 21 July 1876; Wheelwright to Shepstone, minute paper 202, 12 August 1876; R.M. Ladysmith to Shepstone, unnumbered, 22 July 1876.

Shepstone's express intention of fragmenting the Hlubi as far as possible seems to have been achieved if one views the widespread dispersal of the Natal Hlubi after 1875. After mid-1876 when the last of the magistrates' reports had been returned, the Natal Government appears to have ceased to concern itself further with the rehabilitation of the Hlubi. No attempts were made after this period to encourage them to return to Natal or to inquire after their well-being in the colony or elsewhere.

It has been mentioned that Wolseley, by establishing the 'Putile Fund' in mid-1875 had made possible the rehabilitation of the Ngwe. It was the task of his successor, Sir Henry Bulwer, to ensure that the Legislative Council voted the annual allocation of £3,000 and that this money was efficiently distributed. This Bulwer failed to do. In 1875, the Council reluctantly agreed to vote the expenditure of £3,000, and in April Carnarvon was obliged to write to Bulwer advising him to remind the Council of the British Government's pledge to compensate members of the Ngwe⁸⁹. Despite this warning, in 1876 the Council halved the annual allocation, and Shepstone attempted to channel some of the money into the establishment of a technical Institution to teach trades and agricultural practices to Africans in Natal. Bulwer's sympathies lay with the majority of the Council's members and he wrote to Carnarvon in 1876 expressing his support for an alternative scheme proposed in the Council to make *ex gratia* payments to relieve individual cases of hardship⁹⁰. The ^{Permanent} Under-Secretary of State, R.G. Herbert, replied in July and in a strongly worded minute ordered Bulwer to adhere to the British Government's promise to make restitution to the Ngwe⁹¹. However it would appear that Carnarvon was again not prepared to force the issue because he needed the support of Shepstone and the colonists in his ambitious plans for southern Africa. Thus the allocation for 1876 remained at £1,500 instead of the £3,000 originally earmarked⁹².

In May 1877, about nine months after the arrival of the despatch from Herbert, Bulwer appointed a six-man committee to consider the best method of employing the fund set aside for the relief of the Ngwe. The

89. CSO 79/120, no. 212, Carnarvon to Bulwer, 26 April 1876.
 90. Herd, Bent Pine, p.122.
 91. Ibid.
 92. NBB vol III, Committee Report on Putile Fund 1877, p.1

principal figures on the committee were John Shepstone, now Secretary for Native Affairs, Napier Broome, the Colonial Secretary and Durnford, who had arrived back in Natal after nine months leave in England. Durnford's influence on the committee was strong and it adopted as a working policy the recommendations drafted by him in a memorandum dated 28 May 1877⁹³. Through the committee Durnford was able to put into practice the ideas that he favoured for the "civilisation" and "advancement" of the Ngwe by encouraging them to accept communal title to land. The report of the committee throws some light on to the position of the Ngwe during 1876 and early 1877. Three hundred and seventy seven huts were found to be in the location and a further 285 huts on private farms. There were 600 people (about half of those on private farms) living on the farm "Maritzdam", then the possession of the Natal Land and Colonisation Company. On private lands the Ngwe were paying rents of from ten shillings to a pound a year; except on "Maritzdam" where they paid a pound a year. Those in the location were reported to be owners of good huts and healthy crops. However they owned only 1,200 head of cattle and the committee noted that the "large herds of cattle of the days before Langalibalele are now not seen"⁹⁴.

The relatively small number of huts in the location and on neighbouring farms shows that many Ngwe had not returned to their former homes. Before 1873-74 it was estimated by the committee that there were 1,100 huts on the location and on the farm "Maritzdam", whereas in 1877 the total was 585. If these figures are accurate, they indicate that nearly half of the Ngwe moved onto private land well removed from their location, or had presumably sought employment in towns within Natal, or worked at the diamond fields, or remained with other Africans in Natal.

Magistrates' returns, made in the first few months of 1877 reveal the presence of 247 former members of the Ngwe living near Ladysmith in a state of "helpless confusion". Another 550 were in the Umvoti

93. Man, 'Durnford in the history of Natal', p.35
 94. NBB, vol III, Committee Report on Putile Fund, p.4.

division. There were 215 Ngwe huts reported in the Umsinga division and 1,313 members of the former chiefdom were scattered throughout the upper Tugela district⁹⁵. The Ngwe were consequently dispersed throughout central and northern Natal in a fairly similar pattern to the Hlubi.

The main recommendation of the committee, which presented its final report to the Executive Council in December 1877, was that money from the fund be used to purchase the farm "Maritzdam" which was within the boundaries of the former location. Two thousand acres of the farm would be then divided into allotments of no more than ten acres. This plan was in keeping with Durnford's previous attempts to encourage the Ngwe to become individual land-holders. This can be seen in the other recommendations of the committee. The ten-acre allotments were open for sale at a price of ten shillings an acre. Owners of land would then be financially assisted to improve "the mode of cultivation and the breeding of stock, (to) encourage irrigation, manuring, planting and fencing, (to) open up the location by road-building and to encourage transport - riding, the ownership of wagons and the sale of produce"⁹⁶. In other words the committee envisaged the Ngwe as becoming peasant producers dependent on a market economy for their existence. A suggestion of lesser importance which was made by the committee was that a sum of £324 be allocated to Wheelwright for *ad hoc* payments to members of the Ngwe who were in desperate need of relief. Magistrates were to claim from Wheelwright for money for needy individuals of the Ngwe resident in their divisions⁹⁷.

The recommendations looked impressive in print and doubtless satisfied Bulwer's superiors in England. However few of the proposals came to fruition. Firstly, colonists who had previously shown concern for the Ngwe, and might have been expected to ensure that the proposals of the committee were carried out, became embroiled with new political

95. SNA 1/6/6, no. 137, R.M. Upper Tugela to Shepstone, 24 April 1877; SNA 1/1/235, no. 137, R.M. Umvoti to Shepstone, 24 April 1877. (Mistakenly filed for 1896).
96. NBB, vol. III, Final Report of the Putile Fund Committee, dated January 1878.
97. Ibid.

issues in South Africa. Shepstone's annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 transformed it into a British colony. However Shepstone was dependent on the support of Afrikaners in the Transvaal to ensure that the new colony would federate with the former British colonies in South Africa. According to Thompson, Shepstone decided to overthrow the Zulu kingdom to satisfy the Afrikaners that the British Government "had a sound view of race relations and the strength to enforce its decisions"⁹⁸. Guy, from a different perspective, has seen the attack on the Zulu kingdom as an attempt by British "to facilitate the advance of capitalist production in southern Africa"⁹⁹ and Etherington has seen the motive for the war in Britain's need to organise labour migration in southern Africa to permit the "efficient development of new mineral discoveries"¹⁰⁰. A detailed discussion of the reasons for British involvement in Zululand does not fall within the scope of this work. However it is important to note that Bishop Colenso became involved in the defence of the Zulu cause and had little time to spare for the relatively unimportant issue of restitution for the Ngwe. Similarly Durnford's attention was turned away from the Ngwe when, in 1878, he was appointed to a Boundary Commission to investigate conflicting land claims made by the Zulu kingdom and the Transvaal Afrikaners along the north-west border of the Zulu kingdom¹⁰¹.

Secondly, reports of the Trustee of the Putile Fund, C. Boast, made in 1880 and 1881, reveal that none of the Ngwe had purchased lots because they felt that the land belonged to them, "having been bought with the money obtained for cattle seized from the tribe"¹⁰². Another reason why the Ngwe were reluctant to buy up these plots was given by J. Methley, one of the members of the committee, who felt that the Africans considered the plots too small for efficient farming. He also added that many of the ten acre lots were "mostly stones and unfit for cultivation"¹⁰³.

98. L. Thompson, 'The subjection of the African chiefdoms', *OHS*, vol. II (1971) p.262.
 99. J. Guy, 'The British invasion of Zululand: some thoughts for the centenary year', *Reality*, vol. II, no. 1 (1979), p.8.
 100. N.A. Etherington, 'The meaning of Shepstone's coronation of Cetshwayo', (unpublished paper presented at a conference on 'The Anglo-Zulu war, a centennial reappraisal', University of Natal, Durban, 1979), p.36.
 101. Brookes and Webb, *History of Natal*, p.130.
 102. SNA 1/1/51, minute papers, Report of Putile Tribe Trust, 1880.
 103. Kit Bird Collection, K.C.A.L., vol. 8, pp.97-105, J.E.Methley to Bird, n.d.

Another possible reason was that, despite Durnford's assurances to the Ngwe who returned to live at "Maritzdam" that they would not have to pay rent, in 1880 they were paying an annual rent of £1 per plot, though it is not clear in Boast's reports who was the recipient of this rent.

Both of Boast's reports disclose that some of the Ngwe were keen to buy land, but only in communally - held 50 acre lots. The attempt to encourage the Ngwe to become peasant producers appears to have been a failure, whether the move was paralysed by the impracticability of farming on ten acre lots of poor quality, or whether the scheme was resisted by the Ngwe.

It is apparent that the Ngwe were not more than partially compensated for the losses they sustained during 1873-1874, and that the money in the fund was never paid out in full¹⁰⁴. They remained, at least for a decade after 1874, poor and divided. Sections of the chiefdom like many of the Hlubi, were obliged to seek employment at the diamond fields. The magistrate of the Upper Tugela division, A. Allison, claimed that it was mainly because the Ngwe could earn relatively good wages at the fields that "they managed to keep pace with their calamities"¹⁰⁵. The Natal Government was extremely dilatory in making amends to the Ngwe and the Home Government did not ensure that full restitution was made by the Natal officials. Only in 1881 was a regent, a woman named Umkossase, appointed over the Ngwe¹⁰⁶. Her evidence to the Natal Native Commission of 1881-82 paints a cheerless picture of a defeated and dispirited people:

The tribe is poor, and have few ploughs or wagons. The only ones who are well off are those who have daughters... The location is not large enough for the tribe, and many have to live on private farms and pay rents.....

104. As late as 1932 there was still £1,986 in the Putile Trust Fund, H. Rogers, Native Administration in the Union of South Africa (Johannesburg, 1966), p.95.
105. SNA 1/1/235, no. 137, R.M. Upper Tugela to J. Shepstone, 24 April 1877.
106. NBB 1882, Evidence taken before the Natal Native Commission, 1881-82, p.341.

We complain that in addition to the Hut Tax, part of our tribe living on the farm Maritzdam, which was bought for us, have to pay a rent of £1 a hut¹⁰⁷.

Although evidence given by Africans before the Commission revealed that "social changes were shaking the foundations of traditionalism"¹⁰⁸ throughout Natal, Umkossase's specific complaints about the location, the payment of rent, and the poverty of the Ngwe suggests that the degree of distress among them was unusually acute. Their plight was attributable not so much to "social changes" but to the destruction of the bases of their social cohesion by the Government's actions in 1873 and 1874.

The Langalibalele affair also had deep significance for the leading protagonists involved in it. Shepstone's reputation among most of the colonists and British officials remained untarnished. However his reputation among Africans in Natal probably waned. Durnford believed that the confidence of the Africans in Shepstone had been destroyed during 1873 and 1874¹⁰⁹. Frances Colenso, the Bishop's daughter, believed that "the ground of confidence has been shaken by the treatment of these two tribes" and that the Africans had "no confidence in his justice - his favourites prosper and those who offend him go to the wall"¹¹⁰. The increasingly bureaucratic nature of African administration in Natal after 1875 is partly an indication that Shepstone's personal influence which he appeared to hold over many Africans in Natal had diminished. Possibly the Langalibalele incident also brought home to him the fact that it was becoming increasingly difficult for any one man to reconcile the differing interests and aspirations of classes of whites and Blacks in Natal by means of personal authority alone. Yet, as Brookes and Webb have remarked, even after Shepstone relinquished his post of Secretary for Native Affairs and assumed duty as the first Administrator of the

107. Ibid., pp.341-342.
108. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.220.
109. Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.94, from Colenso Papers, K.C.A.L., Mrs. Colenso to Mrs. Lyell, 7 July 1874, quoting Durnford.
110. Rees, Colenso Letters, p.316, F.Colenso to Mrs. Lyell, 23 June 1875.

Transvaal in 1877, Shepstonism,"in its later phases, less personal and less imaginative than its founder...lay heavily on Natal"¹¹¹. His joint scheme with Carnarvon for the provision of a stable workforce from the labour reservoir of the African interior failed, mostly for reasons which were "temporary and peculiar to the 1870's"¹¹².

As far as Bishop Colenso was concerned the treatment meted out to Langalibalele and the Hlubi woke him up to the reality of the relationship between colonial Natal and its Black population. Colenso's defence of the Hlubi caused a rift between him and Shepstone, and his popularity with most colonists waned considerably. However this did not deter him from fighting as tenaciously for justice for the Zulu nation and Cetshwayo as he had done for the Hlubi and Langalibalele. Colenso died in 1883. Ironically his funeral at St. Peters Church in Pietermaritzburg was witnessed by most of the town's mourning colonists¹¹³.

Carnarvon's attempts to create a second dominion in the Empire¹¹⁴ proved to be a failure, mostly because his timing was premature. The fact that the crisis in Natal provided him with a pretext to promote his confederation policy in Natal must not be lost sight of. Wolseley, his Special Commissioner in Natal, returned to Britain in September 1875 having achieved what he was instructed to do. He returned to South Africa briefly in 1879 as High Commissioner for the Transvaal and Natal. Pine, the man whom Wolseley replaced, retired on pension to England in April 1875, and died in 1891. The wholehearted show of sympathy extended to him by the Natal colonists provided a few crumbs of comfort for his retirement.

Langalibalele's avowed enemy, John MacFarlane, was not left untouched by the events which followed his decision, in June 1873, to

111. Brookes and Webb, History of Natal, p.119.
112. Ftherington, 'Labour Supply and the South African confederation', p.253. Ftherington here examines the reasons for the failure of Carnarvon's plans.
113. Herd, Bent Pine, p.141.
114. Carnarvon had been instrumental in the passage of the British North American Act in 1867, Guest, Crisis in Natal, p.99.

administer "signal punishment" to the Hlubi. He left for England on sick leave in February 1874 a "mental and physical wreck"¹¹⁵. On his return from leave he was transferred to the less important post of magistrate at Richmond, a tacit acknowledgement of his failure to bring the Hlubi chief to heel with the least possible commotion.

Langalibalele remained thirteen years in virtual isolation at the Cape though little of this time was spent at Robben island. After weighing up the evidence presented in London in late 1874 by Colenso, Carnarvon decided that the sentence on Langalibalele was too severe. However he concluded that the Hlubi chief still deserved some form of punishment and in a despatch dated 4 December 1874, Carnarvon recommended that Langalibalele should be removed from Robben island and kept as a prisoner on a location outside Cape Town. A few followers and members of his family should be permitted to join him there. Carnarvon also arranged for Colenso to visit the chief and for the provision of "comforts" for which the Natal Government would pay¹¹⁶. Carnarvon therefore advised the Queen in December 1874 to disallow the "Natal Criminals Bill", which had been passed by the Cape Government in July 1874 to allow for Langalibalele's imprisonment on Robben island. This order was conveyed to the Cape Government in a despatch carried by Shepstone on his return from England in January 1875. The Cape Ministry, after considerable debate, during which the Prime Minister, Molteno, threatened to resign, eventually repealed the "Natal Criminals Bill" in April 1875¹¹⁷.

Finally, in June 1875, Langalibalele was permitted to settle at "Uitvlugt", a farm on the Cape Flats, under the supervision of a superintendent¹¹⁸. Colenso, who visited him there in 1880, described

115. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.17.
116. BPP C-1121, no. 30, Carnarvon to Barkly, 4 December 1874.
117. Le Cordeur, 'Relations between Natal and the Cape', p.299.
118. BPP C-1342, no. 30, Barkly to Carnarvon, 4 June 1875.

119. Colenso Collection, Natal Archives, Cape Town, 1875.
120. The Hlubi, Natal Archives, Cape Town, 1875.

[Faint, mostly illegible text on the left page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

it as a "miserable place, so dry in summer that scarcely anything will grow there... and in winter much of the ground must be a swamp"¹¹⁹. Colenso also alleged that a sum of £500 voted by the Natal Legislative Council for Langalibalele's maintenance was spent paying the salaries of his custodians. Three of his wives were permitted to join him in 1877, but another two were refused permission. In 1876 expenditure on Langalibalele's household exceeded £500, and any material additions were forbidden by the superintendent¹²⁰. Although Langalibalele did not physically lack comforts, he was, according to Colenso's report in 1880, lonely, and expressed a desire to return to Natal¹²¹.

However his return was what officials in Natal sought to prevent. Shepstone in October 1875 strongly rejected a suggestion by Colenso that Langalibalele be allowed to return to Natal after about three years from the time of his release from prison. As far as the Natal Administration was concerned his re-establishment among his own people was even more unthinkable, particularly as it was customary to the "new policy - to destroy chieftainship"¹²². Consequently Langalibalele was allowed to return to Natal only in April 1887. He was required to live in the Zwartkop location under the supervision of Teteleku, one of the six African assessors at his trial, and an acknowledged supporter of the Government. He died in 1889, and was buried in the foothills of the Drakensberg near the upper Bushmans river, the site of his grave remaining for many years a closely kept Hlubi secret.

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- 119. Colenso Collection, pamphlets C-1278, Cetywavo and Langalibalele, p.1.
 - 120. SNA 1/6/8, no. 203, minute by acting S.N.A. Cape Town, 8 January 1877.
 - 121. Colenso Collection, Cetywavo and Langalibalele, p.1.
 - 122. SNA 1/7/7, p.151, minute by T. Shepstone, 18 October 1875.
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CONCLUSION

After a century or more of independent existence as a relatively large chiefdom on the upper Mzinyathi river in south-east Africa, the Hlubi were, in the early 1820s, broken up by the wars of the Difaqane. Groups of the Hlubi were dispersed over wide areas of southern Africa following these wars. However in the late 1820s, the main house of the Hlubi returned to the upper Mzinyathi and began to reconstitute a polity under the rule of Dlomo, under the overall sovereignty of Shaka and, later, under Dingane. The Hlubi appear to have retained more autonomy than chiefdoms closer to the centre of the kingdom.

Late in Dingane's reign, Langalibalele was able to take control over the Hlubi, and apparently reasserted the authority that Hlubi chiefs had had before Shaka. Evidence of this is suggested by the fact that the Hlubi are reported to have had eleven *amabutho* in Langalibalele's time, whereas in the reign of Langalibalele's father, Mthimkhulu, there were apparently only two, and none in the period of Bhungane, Langalibalele's grandfather. It has been suggested that the functions of the *amabutho* in Nguni society were being transformed in the early nineteenth century and that they were becoming "units with a wider range of socially important duties expected of them"¹. By keeping men in *amabutho* the chief could delay the marriage age and was able to divert labour from production for the homestead to production for himself. Power could be centralised in the person of the chief and his advisers.

It seems that during the early 1840s the Hlubi continued to enjoy a certain amount of independence from the Zulu central authority, probably because they occupied territory on the kingdom's north-west border, and could form a defensive flank against raids by the Ndebele

1. J.B. Wright, 'Pre-Shakan age-group formation', p.22.

under Mzilikazi.

Langalibalele also appeared to form loose alliances with some neighbouring chiefdoms and established a close relationship with the Ngwe, whose chief, Phuthini, was Langalibalele's uncle. The two chiefdoms lived close to each other and inter-marriage between their members was frequent.

However, with the establishment of British and Boer communities in south-east Africa in the 1840s, a new avenue of political choice began to emerge for dissidents in the Zulu kingdom. They could now take flight and seek protection with whites. After a clash with Mpande in the late 1840s, which might have been an attempt by Mpande to assert the power of the central authority over the peripheries of the kingdom, Langalibalele and Phuthini took this avenue in 1848 and sent messages to the Natal authorities enquiring if they could cross into the colony.

Natal at this time was a fledgling colony, whose few officials were struggling to cope with the problem of controlling its Black and white population. This issue had been exacerbated by the fact that thousands of Africans had crossed into the colony from the Zulu kingdom and from south of the Mzimkhulu since before the time that Britain officially took control of the area in late 1845. Lieutenant-Governor West therefore attempted to prevent the entry of Langalibalele's Hlubi and the Ngwe by sending messages to Mpande in March 1848 advising him not to attack the two chiefdoms as such conduct was disturbing the peace of the border and might "interrupt the friendship" which existed between the Natal Government and Mpande².

The Hlubi and Ngwe leaders, unable to wait any longer for a definite reply to their request, took the decision to cross into Natal in mid-1848. They entered Natal not as typical refugees, but with nearly

2. Records of Natal Executive Council, p.296, E.C.16, message from West to Mpande, 23 March 1848.

all their cattle and as cohesive groups with their leadership structures intact.

From mid-1848 to late 1849 the Hlubi and Ngwe resided on land near the Klip river that belonged to trekker farmers. The fact that they were allowed to remain undisturbed on private land was probably because the Natal authorities lacked a consistent policy towards African land-holding during this period. In late 1849, in accordance with Government policy to move Africans into locations, the two chiefdoms were forcibly moved to new territory along the upper Thukela and Little Bushman's rivers. Here they were expected to guard the white farmers in the Bushman's river area from Bushman raids into Natal.

Although they had access to good grazing and cropping land, it was not easy for the Hlubi and Ngwe to resume their former activities as cattle-keepers and agriculturists. Probably the most immediate difficulty facing some members of the two chiefdoms was that they found themselves resident on land owned (and in many cases farmed) by whites. This problem of access to land had arisen because the boundaries of the locations had been improperly delineated. These families found themselves faced with demands from the owners of the land for rent or labour, and the local magistrate, Blaine, found, in 1853 and 1854, that he was unable to resolve the discontent that prevailed among many Hlubi resident on white-owned lands. However, this potential source of trouble between some Hlubi and their white neighbours, although never eliminated during the 1850s and 1860s, did not lead to immediate conflict as some of the white Weenen residents feared it might.

A longer-term source of irritation, and one which affected nearly all the Hlubi and Ngwe, was the attempt by the Natal administration to bring its Black subjects under more effective control. All Africans were placed under the jurisdiction of a chief, traditional or appointed, who in turn was answerable to the Governor as Supreme Chief. Magistrates were appointed to every district of Natal to ensure that chiefs and headmen adhered to the Government's regulations. These regulations were aimed

at the subordination of Africans to the administration and the prevention of conflict between groups of Africans or between whites and Africans. Thus, for example, the carrying of spears was theoretically forbidden, as were accusations of witchcraft, and traditional ceremonies had to gain the approval of the Supreme Chief. Most elements of customary law were sanctioned, but the law was not codified until the 1870s, which allowed Shepstone, the Secretary for Native Affairs, the opportunity to adapt it where he saw fit. For example Shepstone deemed murder a capital offence and animal mutilation was forbidden. Interference by the authorities in what the Hlubi and Ngwe regarded as internal affairs led to a number of altercations in the 1850s and 1860s that seemed to give Langalibalele's Hlubi, particularly, a reputation among the colonists of being "contumacious".

Probably the most far-reaching measure introduced by the Government was the imposition in 1849 of 7s. tax on huts in the locations, payable annually. In order to pay this tax, a number of Hlubi and Ngwe may have been forced to seek work on neighbouring white farms or in other parts of Natal. Alternatively they would have had to sell agricultural surpluses or cattle in order to pay the hut tax. Whether as rent payers, tax-payers or labourers, the Hlubi and Ngwe became increasingly drawn into a cash nexus and into the economy of the colony.

As a result, the economic activities of the Hlubi and Ngwe became more diversified. For example, it can be estimated that, by 1858, over 1,500 Hlubi were wage-labourers or share-croppers on white-owned farms³. By 1859 magisterial reports indicate that "considerable" numbers were working for wages along the Natal coast and in the Cape colony⁴. It also seems that gradually many of the Hlubi and Ngwe became "proto-peasants", exchanging surplus grain, cattle or vegetables for cash

3. SNA 1/3/7, no. 67, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 7 May 1858.
 4. SNA 1/3/8, no. 50, MacFarlane to Shepstone, 4 October 1859.

from neighbouring farmers or from white middlemen or travellers on the "overberg" route which passed close to their locations.

Participation in the colonial market economy not only began to transform the nature of the 'traditional' economy of the Hlubi and Ngwe, but it also began to erode the bases of the social cohesion of these groups. It offered the opportunity for individuals, particularly young men, to move away from their chief's jurisdiction. It seems, from the little evidence available, that some of the young men of the Hlubi and Ngwe were able, to some extent, to escape from the authority of the elders by entering into employment with whites. This would have allowed them to earn money with which they could have purchased cattle for the payment of *lobolo*. Thus young Hlubi and Ngwe men might have been able to marry and establish their own homesteads at an earlier age than previous generations. It should, however, be noted that a man's ability to marry and establish his own homestead would have been restricted by the need to gain formal permission to do so from his own father and his father-in-law, nor did all those men who sought employment with whites necessarily do so because they wished to escape from the ambit of 'traditional' control.

The movement of people away from the location, whether it was voluntary or forced, clearly threatened to reduce the extent of the authority of the chiefs and elders. In addition, chiefs were in the difficult position of having to ensure that their followers obeyed Government orders, such as the payment of hut tax or the provision of labourers for Government projects (the *isibhalo* system), that were extremely unpopular. Langalibalele took action, in the 1850s and 1860s, which seems to have been calculated to counter this dissipation of his power. He discouraged his followers from working or living on neighbouring farms; he assisted people from other districts of Natal or from outside Natal to settle in his location, and it appears as though he tried to assert himself as a spokesman with the colonial authorities for Hlubi who resided outside the location.

The Government's establishment of an administrative hierarchy based on chieftainship seems to have added to the difficulties faced by Langalibalele and Phuthini in maintaining control over the internal affairs of their chiefdoms. It also led to frequent disputes between them and the colonial authorities. For example, on a number of occasions during the 1850s and early 1860s Langalibalele and Phuthini ignored the Government's demand to supply labourers. In 1869 Langalibalele became involved in a wrangle with Shepstone and MacFarlane for refusing to co-operate in the administration of the marriage law of 1869. Welsh argues that chiefs who owed their elevation to the Government were more than usually amenable to governmental control, while hereditary chiefs, such as Langalibalele and Phuthini, were less disposed to accept the authority of the Supreme Chief⁵. This fact might also account for the poor relationship that developed between Langalibalele and local officials, such as MacFarlane and Rudolph. However it must have been apparent to the two chiefs and their respective adherents that they could not always resist orders without incurring punishment. Thus in the 1850s and 1860s, both chiefs were careful not to overstep the mark in the manner that Sidoyi had done in 1857 and Matshana in 1858. The difficulty of forming a relationship with rulers who were intent on manipulating them in the interests of the colonial administration presented an enduring problem for the Hlubi and Ngwe chiefs.

That the Hlubi and Ngwe leaders were, by the early 1860s, encountering difficulties in reaching an accommodation with the Natal's white rulers, is suggested by their agreeing to accept the presence of missionaries among their people in the mid-1860s. It seems that Langalibalele, while he actively opposed the evangelical activities of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society, at the same time realised the political advantages that missionary Hansen could offer as a mediator between the Hlubi and the Government, or the Hlubi and other African

5. Welsh, Roots of Segregation, p.111-131.

groups. For slightly different reasons the Ngwe chief Baso and his adherents fully co-operated with missionary Neizel of the Berlin Missionary Society, in an attempt to shore up Baso's tenuous position as leader amongst his own people.

The problems encountered by the Hlubi and Ngwe leaders in ruling their own people and in coming to terms with the colonial authorities seem, temporarily, to have eased in about the mid-1860s. It seems that this might have been due to a slowing down in the pace of internal change among the Hlubi and Ngwe as a result of a decline in the colony's economy. The "overberg" trade largely collapsed and the demand for African grain, cattle and vegetables, though never great, was smaller than it had been for at least a decade. It is possible that Langalibalele and Baso's successor, Manzezulu, did not feel the need to assert their status among their people in a period when fewer of their subjects were being incorporated into the wider colonial economy. Significantly, there is no record of any dispute between the authorities and the Hlubi and Ngwe from 1864 to 1869.

However, the discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West in 1867 and the consequent concentration of population in this area offered a lucrative market for cattle and foodstuffs from Natal. It also created a demand for African labour from Natal, and by the end of the 1860s hundreds of Natal Africans, among them considerable numbers of Hlubi and Ngwe, were working for the higher wages that were offered at the diamond fields. The discovery of diamonds thus offered new opportunities to Hlubi and Ngwe peasant producers and labour migrants alike, though it is not apparent to what extent their participation in the market economy was voluntary or to what extent it was a response to the need to raise cash for payments to the State. The migration of numbers of the Hlubi to the diamond fields seemed to reopen the internal strains that had been apparent in the 1850s and early 1860s. According to a contemporary, the exodus of Africans to the fields had "undermined the political influence of

the elder chiefs, such as Langalibalele⁶.

However the discovery of diamonds was to have far greater effect on the relationship firstly between the local white farmers and the Hlubi and Ngwe, and secondly between the administration and the two chiefdoms. In order to gain a proper perspective on the relationship between the Hlubi and Ngwe and the white Weenen farmers it is important to trace the attempts made by whites in Natal to farm on a commercially viable basis. Some colonists had trumpeted the advantages of Natal as a farming country in the early 1850s, and speculators had acquired large areas of land by the mid-1850s. However, white agriculture had stagnated because of the difficulties of obtaining labour, and the lack of sufficient capital, farming expertise, or a steady domestic market. Consequently many land-owners, some of them speculators, some of them aspirant commercial farmers, ceased farming and were content to lease land to Africans⁷. This was generally the case in the Weenen county, though less land seems to have fallen into the hands of speculators and a greater number of farmers attempted to farm commercially in this district.

The opening of the diamond fields offered the white Weenen county farmers the chance to sell livestock, grain and vegetables in Griqualand West. However they were unable to take full advantage of this new market. The reason for this was that the financial position of many whites had deteriorated during the economic slump of 1864-1868. It had become impossible to raise loans and there was little money available for land purchase. Several Weenen county farmers ran up large debts. In addition, many wool producers in the northern districts of Natal were severely hit by outbreaks of "blue-tongue" among their flocks in the mid-1860s and by a dramatic fall in the price of wool in the late 1860s.

6. T.J. Lucas, *The Zulus*, p.161.
7. For fuller explanation see Slater, 'Land, Labour and capital in Natal', *Journal of African History*, vol. XVI (1975), pp.262-264.

This meant that the sheep farmer "had no means to re-coup his losses" because many had concentrated on wool production⁸. Moreover, farmers who had managed to weather the slump and the decline of the sheep industry were still unable to produce for the Griqualand West market because of the unavailability of Black labour.

These frustrations were exacerbated by the fact that white farmers were, in the late 1860s and early 1870s, coming into direct competition with African producers and cattle-keepers. As Bundy, Slater and Etherington have convincingly argued, African peasant producers in Natal "responded more effectively to economic opportunities and pressures than most white pastoralist-cultivators"⁹. In 1869 the *Natal Witness* tersely summed up the position; "The Kafirs are coming into competition with the white man and are fairly beating him in the markets"¹⁰. The following year Lieutenant-Governor Keate informed the Secretary of State for the colonies, the Earl of Kimberley, of the seriousness of the competition posed to some white farmers by African producers¹¹.

The fact that white farmers were in many cases unable to compete successfully with their African neighbours in the production of foodstuffs gave rise to jealousy and resentment. This was particularly so in the Weenen district, where the wealth of the Hlubi at this time is indicated in Natal Blue Book returns of African-owned cattle. These figures, which show that the Hlubi had increased the size of their herds on a scale unprecedented among Africans in Natal, confirm the belief, often stated in contemporary sources, that the Hlubi were a "wealthy" people. The resentment felt by many white farmers against the Black neighbours in the vicinity of Bushman's river was given expression at meetings in Estcourt in 1872 and in the local Press in 1872 and 1873.

8. Leverton, 'Government finance', p.101.
9. Bundy, 'African peasants', p.312.
10. *Natal Witness*, 12 January 1869.
11. GH, vol. XXII, no. 1269, L.C. no. 5, Keate to Kimberley, 24 October, 1870.

From the authorities' point of view the stagnation of white agriculture in the late 1860s and early 1870s gave cause for concern. From the time that Shepstone had taken control of the Native Affairs department in 1846, he had sought means of increasing the flow of Africans into the labour market without basically altering the locations policy. The fact that Africans had access to land in the locations and on privately-owned white farms severely hampered his efforts, but the organisation of the labour market, as Etherington has clearly shown, was one of his major concerns during his term of office¹². The migration of a large number of Africans from Natal to the diamond fields in the late 1860s to seek work was particularly worrying for the Natal authorities because it reduced the size of the African labour force at a time when a regular supply of labour was essential if advantage was to be taken of the upswing in the economy. Significantly, Shepstone stepped up his efforts in the early 1870s to ensure a regular labour supply, and cast his eyes northward to the "great labour catchment" of central Africa¹³.

By the early 1870s there appears to have been friction between the settlers in northern Natal and their Black neighbours with whom they were coming increasingly into competition. Relations with the administration took a turn for the worse in 1873 when MacFarlane demanded that Langalibalele send in his followers' guns for registration. For reasons which are not readily apparent, Langalibalele refused to obey, and MacFarlane, in mid-1873, resolved that he should be punished. Subsequent demands from MacFarlane that Langalibalele should present himself in Pietermaritzburg to account to Shepstone for his failure to obey the Government's orders were met with refusal or equivocation, for reasons which Langalibalele only explained later. From mid-July to mid-September the administration was unable to act one way or the other in regard to Langalibalele because Shepstone was absent from Pietermaritzburg and Lieutenant-Governor Pine had arrived in Natal only in July. When Pine's

12. Etherington, 'Labour supply and South African confederation', pp.237-239.
 13. Ibid., p.242.

messengers arrived in the Hlubi location sometime in late September or early October they were allegedly maltreated by some of Langalibalele's adherents and the chief refused to attend a meeting in Pietermaritzburg as Pine had requested. In the meanwhile some white Weenen county farmers were "fanning the flames" of settler discontent against the Hlubi. By mid-October mutual fears and panic had taken hold of groups of Hlubi and the white inhabitants of Weenen district. This provided a motive for the Government to intervene and forcibly impose its authority over Langalibalele's Hlubi. Near the end of October Pine decided to send a Government force to arrest Langalibalele. Last minute attempts by Langalibalele to conciliate the authorities failed, and, in an atmosphere of growing fear, Langalibalele took the fateful decision to flee into Basutoland with many of his followers.

Even at this stage, in the first few days of November, armed conflict was not inevitable. However the encounter at the top of Bushman's Pass on 4 November which led to the death of five men of the Government's force, including three whites, discharged "thirty years store of accumulated hate and fear" among the colonists¹⁴. The authorities in Natal did nothing to prevent the wave of aggression that was unleashed by the colonial volunteers and the African levies under their command against the Hlubi and their innocent neighbours, the Ngwe.

The haste with which the land of the Hlubi and Ngwe was occupied by whites, the numerous applications made by white farmers for members of the two chiefdoms as labourers, and the confiscation of their livestock points to the critical shortage of land and labour in the northern districts of Natal. The compliant attitude of the Natal authorities to the wishes of the colonists after November 1873 strongly suggests that the Government regarded the recalcitrance of the Hlubi and Ngwe as a fortuitous opportunity to destroy them as independent chiefdoms, and, at the same time to satisfy the colonists' demands for labour by forcing

14. Ibid., p.243.

several thousand Africans into the labour market. This was apparent to Frances Colenso at the time. In a letter to her brother she observed that "the colonists want to drive them [the Hlubi and Ngwe] out to forced labour, not content to wait for the action of natural laws to induce them to sell their muscles to the planter or the farmer"¹⁵. Similarly, de Kiewiet, in an incisive interpretation of the "Langalibalele affair", made over 40 years ago, saw the dispossession of the Hlubi and Ngwe as an:

intemperate and vindictive manifestation of the desire of the colonists to destroy what they conceived to be the too great economic independence of the natives, to limit their lands, and finally to remove the 'restraints' that kept them from freely entering the labour market¹⁶.

Similarly, the immediate and numerous demands for Hlubi land by the settlers has led Guest to venture that "the action taken against the tribe might conceivably have been engineered with a deeper purpose in view than that professed at the time"¹⁷. Etherington has observed that:

The growth of the Hlubi into a prosperous group of peasants created a deep-seated uneasiness among their white neighbours which was as much to blame for the Langalibalele affair as anything done by the local magistrate¹⁸.

The Natal Government's role in the affair is possibly best indicated in its treatment of Langalibalele and his sons. In January

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- 15. Rees (ed.), Colenso Letters, p.282, letter from F. Colenso to her brother, 16 April 1874.
 - 16. De Kiewiet, *The Imperial Factor*, p.37.
 - 17. Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, p.26.
 - 18. Etherington, 'Why Langalibalele ran away', p.7.

1874 the chief was hastily brought to court, and after a trial that later became notorious as a travesty of justice, was sentenced to banishment on Robben island for treason and rebellion. In two subsequent trials, one of Langalibalele's sons was also banished, and six of his sons were sentenced to imprisonment for terms of up to seven years. By incarcerating the Hlubi leaders, Shepstone was aware that he could keep the former members of the chiefdom divided and weak, and more easily controllable by his department.

The 'breaking-up' and dispossession of the Hlubi and Ngwe, and the banishment of Langalibalele might have gone largely unnoticed in the outside world had it not been for the intervention of Bishop Colenso and Durnford in 1874. By printing a vigorous defence of Langalibalele and by canvassing support for the Hlubi cause in Britain, Colenso forced the Home Government into a position where it was obliged to recognise the illegality of some of the Natal Government's actions towards the Hlubi and Ngwe.

Although the British Government made the decision that the Ngwe should be compensated and the Hlubi rehabilitated, the terms of Carnarvon's instructions to this effect in December 1874 were so vague that the Natal officials were able to avoid their strict implementation. It appears that Carnarvon deliberately avoided issuing categorical orders to the Natal Government in case he offended the colonists on whose support he counted for the success of his confederation plans for southern Africa. Furthermore, by early 1875, Carnarvon appears to have accepted Shepstone's vision of the need to expand British dominion over the African hinterland in order to tap the vast reservoir of labour in these areas¹⁹. Consequently, although Carnarvon promised critics of the Natal Government that he would review 'Native policy' in Natal, he could not afford to weaken the Natal administration's hold on its African subjects, if his confederation plans were to come to fruition.

19. For a fuller account see Etherington, 'Labour supply and South African confederation', pp.247-253.

Sir Garnet Wolseley was sent to Natal in February 1875 to change the colony's constitution "in the direction of quasi Crown Colony rule"²⁰. By strengthening the Natal executive at the expense of the legislative he gave Carnarvon and Shepstone more rein to promote their policies in southern Africa. Wolseley's Native Administration Bill was consistent with Carnarvon's scheme. The terms of the Bill indicate that Wolseley and Shepstone collaborated in its framing, and Shepstone, in Colenso's words, was now "firmer in the saddle than ever"²¹, despite the fact that he resigned soon after.

As far as the Hlubi and Ngwe were concerned the Native Administration Law set the seal on their position in 1875. Shepstone would not countenance any suggestion that Langalibalele be allowed to return to Natal as it was contrary to his "new policy", as he called it, of keeping African groups as small and divided as possible. Most of the Hlubi and Ngwe commoners had either to return to a smaller location where they would be placed under "Headmen who owe their elevation to the Government"²², or had to remain among the African groups under whose control they had been placed in 1873 and 1874. Magistrates reports in 1875 and 1876 show that a large number of Hlubi and Ngwe were working on white farms or at the diamond fields. Some were living on white farms in the O.F.S. or with relatives in Basutoland, and evinced no desire to return to Natal. Although Wolseley created the "Putile Fund" in 1875 for the compensation of the Ngwe, the Natal Legislative Council refused, in 1875 and 1876, to sanction the annual vote of £3,000. Bulwer, the new Governor, supported the colonists in their efforts to block the annual vote and Shepstone tried to channel the money into the creation of technical institutions for other Africans in Natal. It does not seem

20. Guest, *Crisis in Natal*, p.71.
 21. Cox, *Life of Colenso*, vol. II, p.426, letter from Colenso to Reverend la Touche, 30 August 1875.
 22. SNA 1/6/8, no. 166, Pine to Shepstone, 15 October 1874.

as if the fund was ever paid out in full and the Ngwe did not receive adequate restitution.

Thus some of the transformations that were taking place in Hlubi and Ngwe society in the 1850s and 1860s were abruptly halted by the events of 1873 and 1874. Where numbers of Hlubi and Ngwe had previously been on the way to becoming peasant producers, now they were forced into becoming clients of other African groups, or were obliged to become wage labourers. The avenues of economic activity which had opened to them in the 1850s and 1860s were in many cases closed. The ruin of an emerging Hlubi and Ngwe peasantry pre-dates, by some two decades, the beginnings of a less violent but no less effective undermining of other peasant producers in Natal²³.

23. See Bundy, 'African peasants', pp.252-265; Slater, 'Land, labour and capital', pp.275-282.

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