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MANDHILAKAZI AND USUTU

The civil war in Zululand from 1880-1884  
and the reaction of the British Officials

by

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## CHAPTER ONE

THE MANDHLAKAZI AND THE USUTU FACTIONS<sup>1</sup>  
AND THE RISE OF ZIBHEBIU

Authorities differ on the nature of the origins of the Mandhlakazi; three versions have been put forward, but the passions aroused by the events that will be discussed in this essay have distorted the Zulu oral tradition and it is impossible to decide which version is correct.

According to Bryant<sup>2</sup>, over a century before the Zulu War, Jama, the head of the small Zulu clan, returned from a raid on a nearby tribe carrying with him amongst the spoils a small boy named Ngwabi. Brought up as one of the chief's family, Ngwabi eventually took a wife but the wedding ceremony had hardly been completed when he died. Jama gave the bereaved bride to his brother Mhlaba and after nine months a son was born and he was called Sojiyisa. The problem is, who was Sojiyisa's father? If he was Mhlaba then the child was closely related to what was to become the royal house of the Zulu nation. If he was Ngwabi then he was the son of an alien and probably a bastard. While members of the Usutu faction might give prominence to the latter version, the followers of the descendants of Sojiyisa consider that the aspersions cast on the circumstances of his birth are "a base and malicious calumny concocted in recent times"<sup>3</sup> by their

1. I use the term 'faction' in this essay rather than 'tribe'. The cohesive elements amongst the members of a tribe tend to be such traditional bonds as blood relationships and the rights of conquest, whereas a faction owes its unity to such more immediate and practical considerations as material advantage, personal safety or political advancement. During the years discussed in this essay these latter elements became predominant as far as both the Usutu and the Mandhlakazi were concerned. At the heart of the faction were the traditional members of the group but they were surrounded by newcomers, driven usually by a search for security in a society in the grip of social upheaval. For information on traditional Zulu social units like the 'tribe' and 'sib' see E.J. Krige, The Social System of the Zulus, (Shuter & Shooter, Pietermaritzburg.) p.34, p.217.
2. A.T. Bryant, Olden Times in Zululand and Natal, (Longmans, Green and Co., 1929.) pp.44-45.
3. Ibid. p.45.

rivals. This could easily be true. Cetshwayo had no doubts as to the legitimacy of the leaders of the Mandhlakazi when he said, "Usibebu<sup>4</sup> and his brother Haiyana and other well-known chiefs are blood royal, and cousins of the king."<sup>5</sup> Neither of the versions advanced by Bryant are accepted by the other writers consulted on the subject. They are all of the opinion that Sojiyisa was the son and not the nephew of Jama, and there is no mention of illegitimacy.<sup>6</sup>

Whatever his family background Sojiyisa established himself as a leader in his own right and built his kraal which he called "IwaMandhlakazi" - the place of the mighty seed.<sup>7</sup> His personal power and his ability as a soldier found favour with Shaka who recognised his paramountcy over the territory that lies north-east of the Nongoma range.<sup>8</sup>

On Sojiyisa's death his son Mapita became chief of what was

4. This is one of the many variants of the name of the leader of the Mandhlakazi. In this essay I have followed the orthography used in E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Wobb, A History of Natal, (University of Natal Press, 1965) as far as Zulu names are concerned. For Zulu names which do not occur in the abovementioned volume, I have followed the orthography used by C.T. Binns, The Last Zulu King, (Longmans, 1963) and J.Y. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, (Longmans, Green and Co., 1911).
5. "Cetshwayo's Story of the Zulu Nation and the War", Macmillan's Magazine, February 1880. It must be noticed that the king said this before the rivalry between the factions had become intense. 'Cousin' here has probably not been accurately translated and it is likely that it means close relative. The relationship between persons with a common male ancestor was of much greater significance in the Zulu society than it is in ours. See Krige, op.cit., p.31.
6. Gibson, op.cit., p.31. Bishop Colenso's Commentary on Prere's Policy, (details not known but published presumably at Bishopstowe for private circulation) p.733. H.C. Lugg, Historic Natal and Zululand, (Shuter & Shooter, Pietermaritzburg) p.147. This makes Cetshwayo and Zibhebhu second and not third cousins as they would be if we accept Bryant's version. For the differing genealogies see Appendix I. Miss Colenso is obviously mistaken when she says that Mapita was a brother of Npando, see F.E. Colenso, The Ruin of Zululand, (William Bidgeway, 1884) Vol.I, p.93, as was Sir Henry Bulwer, see C-3466, No.106, Bulwer to Kimberley, 3/10/82, p.199.
7. Bryant, op.cit., p.31.
8. Gibson, op.cit., p.31.

now called the Mandhlakazi tribe. Although records are sparse there are hints that the Mandhlakazi were never easy in their relations with the Zulus to the south of the Nongoma range. There is evidence however that Mapita was personally loyal to the young Zulu prince Cetshwayo<sup>9</sup> who at the time was collecting the first of his personal followers and establishing them at the kraal "ukubuzi".<sup>10</sup>

It was these young men who were the originators of the name "Usutu" by which Cetshwayo's personal followers became known. Originally a young man's drinking boast it became identified with all those who supported Cetshwayo in his fight for succession against Mbulezi in 1856 when it was used as a war cry.<sup>11</sup> Mapita proved his loyalty in the battle by sending a force to support Cetshwayo.<sup>12</sup>

Although Cetshwayo's bloody victory at Ndondakusuka virtually assured his accession there were still doubts as to whether the more powerful tribes in the north under Mamu, Mnyamana, and Mapita would give him their unqualified support.<sup>13</sup> Of these tribes the Mandhlakazi were the most powerful and geographically remote from the king's kraal. It would seem however that any desire for independence on the part of the Mandhlakazi was kept in control by their chief's personal allegiance to his close relations in the south.

But what would happen if a more independently-minded leader were to succeed Mapita? This is indeed what occurred, for in 1872 both Mapita and Mpande died within a short time of each other.<sup>14</sup> Arrangements began to be made for Cetshwayo's "coronation" just when Sibhebhu succeeded his father as chief of the Mandhlakazi and their

9. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.II, p.384. Mapita's loyalty to Cetshwayo was also mentioned to C.T. Binns in a private conversation he had recently with a member of the Zulu royal house. Mapita's loyalty is denied by Kemp, but all other evidence makes it seem as if he is mistaken in this. See B.H. Kemp, Johan William Colonbrander, (Doctoral thesis, University of Natal, 1962) p.30.

10. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.II, p.384.

11. Ibid. See also C.T. Binns, op.cit., p.37.

12. Gibson, op.cit., p.123.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

allegiance to the new king was soon to be put to the test.

Zibhebhu was born in 1841 and was therefore about fifteen years younger than his royal rival Cetshwayo.<sup>15</sup> As the son of Mapita's chief wife<sup>16</sup> he was his father's legitimate heir.<sup>17</sup> In 1861 he joined Mpande's Mxapo Regiment with other youths of his age<sup>18</sup> where he had the first opportunity to show his remarkable ability as a soldier - an ability which has earned him the reputation of being the greatest Zulu military leader since Shaka.<sup>19</sup>

Little is known of Zibhebhu's life before the Zulu War but some time before his father's death he had a quarrel with his father's eldest son over the ownership of some cattle. Mapita referred the matter to Mpande who, typically, referred it back to Mapita saying that whatever his decision he, Mapita, as father of the young men and chief of the tribe, must be obeyed. Mapita made his judgment in favour of Haiyana.<sup>20</sup> Zibhebhu was to avenge himself for this later.<sup>21</sup>

An interesting story is told by C.T. Binns of a conversation he once had with Cetshwayo's daughter. She remembered Mapita himself warning Cetshwayo of his son, Zibhebhu, who he said was very cunning.<sup>22</sup> Such a warning is certainly in agreement with the facts which emerge from the little information we have on the relations between Mapita and his son.

Zibhebhu, as we have seen, became chief of the Mandhlakazi at the same time Cetshwayo became king of the Zulu nation. The Mandhlakazi, "proud of the strength they felt and had manifested...were now governed by Usibebu, whose courage, resolution and daring stood above those of any Zulu."<sup>23</sup> Would he accept the authority of the new

15. Krige, op.cit., p.506. This date is deduced from the year in which all the members of the Mxapo Regiment were born.

16. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.I, p.93.

17. Krige, op.cit., p.40.

18. Lugg, op.cit., p.147.

19. Ibid, p.149.

20. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., p.93.

21. Vide infra, p.32.

22. Private conversation with C.T. Binns.

23. Gibson, op.cit., p.123.

king? The critical moment came in August 1873 when Cetshwayo and his supporters, who were on their way to his coronation arrived at the sacred place called Makhoni.<sup>24</sup> The northern tribes under Mnyamane, Hamu and Zibhebhu had still not arrived and John Dunn who was a member of Cetshwayo's retinue was seriously concerned, believing that there might be violence when they did. On the third day the supporters of Mnyamana and Hamu appeared, followed at a short distance by Zibhebhu's impi. Slowly they approached Cetshwayo, Dunn and the assembled Zulus. Tension rose, and when Zibhebhu's impi suddenly broke into a trot, the king's followers began to move into a defensive formation. Dunn believed that it was only his urgent pleas which stopped a bloody confrontation.<sup>25</sup> Whether the incident was indicative of real animosity, resentment, jealousy, or just high-spirited nervousness on the part of armed men brought up in a society based on a military tradition, the fact remains that there was some form of distrust and rivalry between the Mankhokazi and the Usutu a decade before their more bloody disputes rent Zululand.

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24. Background and details about the "coronation" fall out of the scope of this essay. A full account can be found in Binns, *op.cit.*, pp.56-75, and John Dunn's account in John Dunn and the Three Generals, ed., D.C.F. Moodie, (Pietermaritzburg Natal printing, 1886) which is very interesting, but must be read with the points mentioned in footnote 25 in mind.

25. D.C.F. Moodie *op.cit.*, pp.37-42. It would seem as if, apart from his photographer, Dunn was the only European to witness this incident. Unless Gibson and Lugg received their information from Zulu sources, which seems unlikely, all accounts of the event spring from Dunn's version. It must therefore be remembered that, when he wrote the account, Dunn had very good reasons to try and create the impression that Cetshwayo had never had the whole-hearted support of the Zulu nation. We cannot ascertain whether the account is a true one, and it is for this reason that I have not mentioned in the narrative that Dunn says that there was at the time "a great division in the Zulu country" between Hamu, Zibhebhu and the southern tribes, and that he had heard that they (Hamu and Zibhebhu) might attempt to capture Cetshwayo. Dunn was convinced that it was only his personal intervention that stopped a "great slaughter". For the other accounts see Gibson, *op.cit.*, p.124; Binns, *op.cit.*, p.61; and D.R. Morris, The Washing of the Spears, (Jonathan Cape, 1966) p.207. Lugg, *op.cit.*, p.132, puts forward a view that smacks very strongly of John Dunn's influence.



During the interval between Cetshwayo's "coronation" and the Zulu war, Zibhebhu seems to have remained quietly in his territory and, showing in peacetime the initiative and independence which manifested themselves in times of war, busied himself in trading, despatching his agents as far afield as Portuguese East Africa.<sup>26</sup> In his trading ventures Zibhebhu was closely associated with John Dunn. Kemp suggests that while he might have appeared to be settling down to a life in commerce, Zibhebhu was actually considering a vast plan of conquest in which he would overrun Swaziland and other territories even further afield.<sup>27</sup> If they existed such plans were cut short by the outbreak of the Zulu War. Zibhebhu was opposed to the war and urged Cetshwayo to avoid fighting the British, but when the defence of Zululand became necessary he fought with his usual verve and courage.<sup>28</sup>

A detailed account of Zibhebhu's actions during the war would be out of place here but he served his king loyally and with skill. Placed in charge of scouting operations before Isandhlwana he is said to have watched Chelmsford leave the ill-fated camp from the top of Isandhlwana hill. He led an impi during the battle, and pursued the fugitives to the drift where he is reputed to have killed Melville and Coghill as they attempted to save the regimental colours. It was he who broke the truce before the battle of Ulundi and commanded the Zulus at the battle itself. In later years he was to boast that the only injury he received in the war occurred when he was struck in the eye by the cork from a bottle of looted champagne.<sup>29</sup>

The Zulu nation did not escape so lightly. After terrible losses on both sides the murderous fire-power of the British redcoats

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26. Kemp, op.cit., p.30. Lugg, op.cit., p.150.

27. Kemp, op.cit., p.30.

28. Morris, op.cit., pp.361-362. Lugg, op.cit., pp.147-148.

29. For the information in this paragraph I have used Lugg, Ibid., Brookes and Webb, op.cit., p.138, together with information given to me by C.T. Binns.

crushed the Zulu fighting spirit, and on the 4th September 1879 Cetshwayo was deposed and sent into exile. It fell to Sir Garnet Wolseley, newly appointed Governor of Natal and the Transvaal, High Commissioner for the adjacent territories and commander-in-chief of the forces, to draw up a settlement for Zululand.<sup>30</sup>

In spite of his ignorance of Zulu affairs and of Zulu society, Wolseley fell to his task with typical brash self-confidence, with the result that his settlement opened the way for a period of anarchy, chaos and bloodshed, with the Mandhlakazi under Zibhebhu, and the Usutu under Cetshwayo (in the final stages) as the main protagonists. The war had seen the Zulu armies defeated in the field by a foreign enemy; Wolseley's settlement set the Zulus at each other's throats, destroyed the harmony of their social structure and crushed the proud independent spirit of the Zulu nation. We must study the settlement in some detail; not only was it at the root of the civil war but it gave official recognition to Zibhebhu's powerful position as chief of the Mandhlakazi.

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30. Brookes and Webb, *op.cit.*, p.143.

## CHAPTER TWO

## THE SETTLEMENT OF ZULULAND

The years preceding the Zulu War had seen the initial plans for confederation put into operation by the Colonial Office and the first attempts to bring the most turbulent territories in turbulent south Africa under British control. It had been realised that a stable, ordered society was a prerequisite to British withdrawal and a reduction in Colonial expenditure. "The road to federation was however fraught with misfortune; each step taken tended to raise new obstacles rather than overcome old ones." The annexation of the Transvaal forced those in authority to turn their attention to Zululand which, with its military system, was seen as a constant threat to its white neighbours. Less than two years after the annexation, British troops entered Zululand and on the 22nd January a British column was virtually wiped out by the Zulu army. The disaster caused panic in Natal and horror in Britain. The war, the policies which had caused it, and the personalities involved were suddenly the main topic of a country-wide debate. The Liberals, in opposition under Gladstone, attacked Disraeli's government for the expansionist policy which had cost the country so dear in lives and in bullion. What was worse was that for all the effort and expense south Africa's problems were no nearer to being solved. The Zulu War was still to be won when it had exhausted the funds in the Imperial Chest meant for all Britain's colonial possessions. It was not long before the reverses suffered in South Africa had their effect on the plan for federation; the policy of expansion was soon changed to one of retrenchment.

"Isandhlwana marks a definite turning point in British South African policy. A policy that in straining after confederation had not hesitated to annex an independent republic, and that would certainly have annexed Zululand and other territories, now turned about and began to slip down the arduous path it had steeply trodden, back again

finally to abandonment and non-interference."<sup>1</sup>

In their efforts to extricate themselves from the repercussions of the war in Zululand the British Government turned on their representatives in South Africa. The appointment of Sir Garnet Wolseley as High Commissioner and commander-in-chief<sup>2</sup> of the forces in the field was a slight both to Sir Bartle Frere and Lord Chelmsford.

One of the most important of Wolseley's tasks was to work out a settlement of Zululand and recent occurrences and public opinion made it essential that two guiding factors be followed. The Zulu power must be broken once and for all, and at the same time there must be no additions to Britain's responsibilities in south Africa.

"The post war settlement, however, was entrusted to Wolseley. Zululand was not to be annexed. No decision could more convincingly demonstrate the wish for the Home Government to be done with its South African adventure. For a generation the ultimate annexation of Zululand had been looked upon as the ineluctable outcome of British presence in Natal. As late as May 1879 opinion in the Colonial Office still agreed with Frere that the annexation of Zululand was a necessary consequence of Zulu defeat. But British policy had lost its momentum. In its hesitation retreat seemed safer and more attractive than advance. Wolseley must, Hicks Beach enjoined, 'carefully bear in mind that the object of Her Majesty's Government is not to add to the extent of British possessions.' Even though Cetwayo languished in the old fort at Cape Town the British Government was not prepared 'to sanction any further interference with the internal Government of the country than may be necessary for securing the peace and safety of the adjacent colonies'."<sup>3</sup>

With these injunctions in mind Wolseley set about his task.

It has been suggested that the original plan for the settlement was put forward in June 1879 by Charles Brownlegs, an authority on native affairs and a former Secretary for Native Affairs in the Cape Colony.<sup>4</sup> His recommendation that Zululand should be placed under the chiefs of the

1. C.W. de Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor in South Africa, (Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. 1965) pp.234-235. In this chapter I have drawn heavily on this book when discussing colonial affairs and policies. I have also used R. Robinson, John Gallagher, Alice Denny, Africa and the Victorians, (Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1961) pp.61-65.
2. Vide supra, p.7.
3. De Kiewiet, op.cit., p.246.
4. E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Webb, A History of Natal, (University of Natal Press, 1965), p.148.

clans that existed in the days before Shaka and that they would be responsible to a British Resident, seems to have been adapted by Wolseley.

Although not directly concerned with native affairs at the time, Sir Theophilus Shepstone was of course consulted, and his comments on a draft plan submitted to him by Wolseley are both interesting and significant.<sup>5</sup> It would seem from Shepstone's memorandum that Wolseley had suggested the division of Zululand into several districts and that he had already approached John Dunn and Zibhebhu as prospective rulers of two of them. With each of the chiefs there would be appointed white agents who would discharge diplomatic functions only.

Shepstone thought the division of Zululand into districts was the only practical solution.

"This division of Zululand into several independent districts...is I think, a good, and indeed the only workable idea under the circumstances..."<sup>6</sup>

But although he approved of the general conception he had serious objections to a number of details and was concerned about what he considered to be omissions from the scheme.

Firstly he advised Wolseley to increase the numbers of territories as "the country would be much more manageable if those districts were smaller and therefore more numerous." Sir Garnet adopted this suggestion.<sup>7</sup>

More important was Shepstone's attitude to Wolseley's plan to appoint white agents who were "to discharge diplomatic duties only."

5. Sir T. Shepstone Papers, Box 33, Shepstone to Colonial Office, 23/8/79, Memorandum on Scheme for settling Zululand.

6. Ibid.

7. F. Eastwood, Black against White: An account of the struggles between native Africans and white settlers in Natal during the 19th Century, p.435, quoted in Brookes and Webb, op.cit., p.148.

"The arrangement seems to me to be too feeble for the position, and the position appears to be this:- the Zulu Government has suffered the total destruction of its Government, that Government was of an arbitrary and barbarous character; the natural and immediate reaction will follow being freed from the restraint of such a Government, must be towards anarchy of a dangerous kind, and Natal as well as Zululand will be affected by it.

The destruction of this restraint has been the work of our hand, and we are bound, for the safety of the people whom we have conquered and for whose good we have professed to act, as well as for the safety of our own position, to replace the Government we have destroyed by one, less barbarous certainly, but equally strong, until at least the country recovers itself somewhat and the people better understand our wishes with regard to them...

It seems to me therefore that for the present at any rate, whatever may be done thereafter, effective control must be done by the power which destroyed the Government that did control the country."<sup>8</sup>

The case for instituting a strong paternal government over Zululand could not be more emphatically stated than this. Moreover the man writing it was recognised as the most knowledgeable on native affairs in south Africa. Yet his advice was ignored.

Shepstone did not only object to the absence of any real government. He was concerned over the fact that the draft plan did not consider in more detail the responsibility the British Government would incur to the chiefs it intended to appoint. With uncanny accuracy he poses questions which the authorities at the time chose to ignore, but which were forced on their attention in later unhappier times.

"There are many points requiring serious consideration which I am unable to notice: one of the most pressing is the responsibility we incur in the appointment of the Native Chiefs; what rights do we give them? Who is to succeed them? Suppose Zibebu receives from us the reward of an independent sovereignty that has been conditionally promised him are we bound to support him in the possession of that reward? Are we bound to secure to the other chiefs the possessions to which we appoint them? In my view, and in what will certainly be the Zulu view, we undoubtedly are, for they are our appointees and our creatures."<sup>9</sup>

On the 1st September at Ulundi, Wolseley, using John Shepstone

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8. T. Shepstone, loc.cit.

9. Ibid.

(Theophilus's brother) as an interpreter, told the 200 assembled Zulus that Cetshwayo, having broken the pledges he made at his coronation was to be exiled forever.<sup>10</sup> The Queen, they were informed, having no quarrel with the Zulu people, did not intend to seize any of their land or property,<sup>11</sup> and Zululand was to be divided into 13 territories over each of which a chief was to be appointed. Each chief signed an agreement<sup>12</sup> in which he promised to respect the boundaries laid down by the authorities, never to allow the re-establishment of the Zulu military system and to give freedom of movement to all under him if they chose to go and seek employment in the adjacent territories. The importation of arms and ammunition was forbidden as was arbitrary capital punishment, and they were forbidden to make war without permission of the British Resident.

As mentioned above, Wolseley did not follow Shopstone's advice and the British Resident was given no real power. In fact Wolseley made a point of mentioning to his superiors that he had obeyed their instructions and if anything, moved in the other direction.

"You will see that I propose, with your approval, to confer upon him no administrative or executive authority, and no power to interfere with the government of the country, except where the interests of British subjects are involved. He will occupy no more than a diplomatic position, and he will be described, as I have already described him to the Chiefs and people, as the eyes and ears of the British Government."<sup>13</sup>

The unfortunate situation that arose out of this absence of real government was aggravated by the personalities of the men chosen to act as appointed chiefs.<sup>14</sup> Two of them were aliens to whom the

10. For the meeting at Ulundi see Binns, op.cit., pp.179-180.

11. He chose to forget that the 'disputed territory' which had been judged to belong rightfully to the Zulus had been seized - the Colenso's however did not. See F.E. Colenso, The Ruin of Zululand (William Ridgway, London, 1884) Vol.I, pp.5-6.

12. The full text of the conditions signed by the appointed chiefs can be found in C.T. Binns, The Last Zulu King, (Longmans, Green & Co., 1911), Appendix C, p.221.

13. C-2482, No.87, Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 3/7/79, p.225.

14. Information for this section of the appointed chiefs is drawn from J.Y. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, (Longmans, Green & Co., 1911) pp.223-225 and R.R. Morris, The Washing of the Spears, (Jonathan Cape, 1966) pp.597-598.

British Government owed a debt for their service in the war - hardly a recommendation to the Zulus who were to be under them. John Dunn received a territory and among the men who had kraals in his district were many who had previously held high positions in Zululand, including one of Cetshwayo's brothers - the redoubtable Dabulamazi. Hlube was a Basuto who with his followers had served the Natal Government for twenty years and was given his territory in Zululand as a reward for this. Another chief who was given territory in recognition of his services during the war was Hamu, a half-brother of the king who had surrendered to the British in the early stages of the war. Under him was placed Mnyamana, the late king's prime minister, who had himself refused the position of appointed chief,<sup>15</sup> and the Abaqulusi tribe. They were members of Cetshwayo's personal kraal and their strong allegiance to their king and their great suffering during the war was not conducive to their settling easily under Hamu.<sup>16</sup>

Although the guiding principle for the settlement was said by Wolseley to be the reinstatement of the old order as it was before the days of Shaka,<sup>17</sup> the only "representatives of these subjugated people"<sup>18</sup> were the Ndandwe tribe under Mcojana, and the AmaTetwa under Mandela.<sup>19</sup>

It is typical of the haphazard planning of the settlement that neither Mcojana nor his people resided in the territory which was assigned to them, but fortunately he did not try to assert his authority over the Umgazini tribe who actually occupied his district.<sup>20</sup> The remaining chiefs, Somkole, Mfanawondhlela, Tshingwayo, Faku, Seketwayo, Ngitshe and Gawozi figured little in the history of the settlement.

15. F.E. Colenso believed that he refused a chieftainship out of loyalty to his king. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.I, p.52.

16. For information on the Abaqulusi see Gibson, op.cit., p.194, p.224.

17. C-2482, No.87 Wolseley to Micks Beach, 3/9/79, p.225.

18. Ibid.

19. Brookes and Webb, op.cit., pp.146-147. For the geographical positions of the territories see Appendix II.

20. Gibson, op.cit., p.224.



Zibhebhu remains. His position as the head of the powerful Mandhlakazi was now given official recognition. On the southern border of the territory awarded to him there resided a powerful group of Usutus under Cetshwayo's brother, Ndabuko, and Usiwetu.<sup>21</sup> Ndabuko had been second only to Cetshwayo in rank and Usiwetu had been in a high position in the councils of the land.<sup>22</sup> They had been stripped of their power, and were now placed in the humiliating position of having to obey a man who had once been their inferior. Moreover their new chief was a headstrong man who was at the head of a tribe which in the past had shown signs of resentment towards the royal house of which they were leaders.<sup>23</sup> Yet Shepstone had specifically warned Wolseley to be particularly careful as to the choice of the appointed chiefs.

"My experience, and I can safely say that it has been, at least, as great as that of most men on such a subject, is, that unless the personal qualities of the native appointed, fit him, in the eyes of the people themselves, for the position he is appointed to fill the appointment will be null, while unless we take proper precautions, our obligations to maintain it will remain."<sup>24</sup>

The war had ended the Zulu military system, sent the Zulu king into exile, destroyed kraals and crops and slaughtered Zulu warriors; the organic structure of Zulu society had been completely disrupted. In such a situation anarchy was but a short step away unless a strong government was imposed over the Zulu people. This was realised by the most knowledgeable and influential authority on native affairs alive at the time, and he had warned Wolseley of the dangers and difficulties unless certain precautions were taken. In spite of this, traitors, nonentities, aliens and headstrong warriors all found their places as appointed chiefs. Amongst these men was placed a representative of the British Government with no real power.

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21. Ibid., p.225.

22. Ibid.

23. Vide supra, p.5.

24. Sir T. Shepstone, *loc.cit.*

Taking a broad view, the abandonment of Zululand to anarchy by the British Government is easily understood.

"The settlement of Zululand was an act of scuttle. The refusal to establish even a protectorate contained a logic that was plain to see... Shocked by the costs of war and peace, bewildered by the confusion that two years of striving had been unable to resolve, the British began to withdraw..."<sup>25</sup>

While it is possible to explain this withdrawal in terms of colonial policies and party politics in Britain it is nevertheless impossible to study the repercussions of the withdrawal on the lives of the men and women of Zululand without being affected by the tragedy which it caused.

Wolseley's mandate might have given him little room to manoeuvre but one wonders if a man with more humility, and perhaps more humanity, could not have made a greater effort to save the Zulus from themselves. It is more quibble to question the appointment of Dunn, Hamu, and Zibhobhu over the 'ultra Usutus' Dabulamazi, Mnyamana and Ndabuko, when one of the appointed chiefs did not even reside in the territory assigned to him. F.E. Colenso echoed the opinion of her family and their influential following when she wrote,

"Having thus crushed the Zulu nation beneath his iron heel, Sir Garnet Wolseley passed on to find fresh fields for his favourite occupation of creating a striking effect, warranted to last just as long as the world cares to look before turning to the next new thing. The usual subsequent collapse occurred this time sooner than was expected, and certain inconveniently honest persons made it their business to prolong public attention till the illuminated word 'success', following over at Sir Garnet's heels, and displayed at the close of each exploit, began to flicker out, and to reveal the black and dismal waste beneath."<sup>26</sup>

But judging by the tone of the report to his superiors in London, Sir Garnet felt the 'illuminated word' was flashing as bright as ever.

25. De Kiewit, op.cit., p.247.

26. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.10-11. For an excellent criticism of the settlement see H. Rider Haggard, Cetywayo, and his white neighbours, (Tribner & Co., London 1882) pp.29-48.

"I have bestowed much care and conscientious thought upon the solution of the difficult problem with which we have to deal in this distant part of the globe, and I have laboured with the great aim of establishing for Her Majesty's subjects in South Africa, both white and coloured, as well as for this spirited people against whom, unhappily we have been involved in war, the enduring foundations of peace, happiness, and prosperity."<sup>27</sup>

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27. C-2482, No.87, Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 3/9/79, p.225.

## CHAPTER THREE

BISHOPSTOWE, THE NATAL AUTHORITIES  
AND THE 'WHITE ADVISERS'

At Bishopstowe, near Pietermaritzburg, the Bishop of Natal and his family had watched with horror the coming and the final tragedy of the Zulu War. Misguided at times, perhaps, but with a passionate concern for justice, Colenso, in his efforts to ensure that the native races were treated in the light of Christian principles, fell foul of the colonists, the Shepstone clan and the Natal administration, but emerged 'a great tribune of African freedom',<sup>1</sup> and more especially the champion of Cetshwayo and the Zulu nation. He had been opposed to the Zulu war and, seeing more clearly than most the real reasons for the attack on Zululand,<sup>2</sup> stood by Cetshwayo as a friend who felt deeply the injustice that had been done the Zulu king. After the war he attacked the authorities for their handling of the Zulu problem. In the many trials, which tested to the full their trust in the white race, the Zulu's faith in 'Sobantu' never wavered.

His diligence, application and painstaking attention to detail can be seen in his works published at Bishopstowe for private circulation, criticising Frere's road to war and Wolseley's settlement.<sup>3</sup>

"Sheet after sheet of closely-printed matter issued (for private circulation) from his printing press at Bishopstowe. He reprinted, analysed, and annotated every leading article, every official proclamation, every correspondent's letter that appeared in Natal on the Zulu Question. He collected information with a diligence and determination that never flagged."<sup>4</sup>

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1. E.H. Brookes and C.de B. Webb, A History of Natal, (University of Natal Press, 1965), p.105.
  2. Ibid, p.117.
  3. The Bishop of Natal, The Course of Political Events in Zululand, (Printed by Magema at the Bishop's Press.)
  4. F.E. Colenso, The Ruin of Zululand, (William Ridgeway, 1884), Vol.I, p.138.

After a life embroiled in controversy, both political and theological, Colenso was spared the ignominious death of his protege for he himself died on the 20th June 1883.<sup>5</sup> His daughter, Frances Ellen, took up the cause, and working from the material the Bishop and she had prepared, produced the two volumes called The Ruin of Zululand.

These books are more than a valuable source of information on the period, for the Colenso's were directly involved in the events occurring in Zululand at the time. In them Miss Colenso set out to prove that the civil war in Zululand was caused primarily by the blunders and, at times, the machinations of the officials in Natal. Her chief targets were Sir Henry Bulwer, the governor of Natal from March 1882, Melmoth Osborn, the British Resident who took up his post a year earlier and John Shepstone, the Acting Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal who became Bulwer's adviser on Zulu affairs. In the eyes of Bishopstove these men were determined to suppress any attempt by the Zulu people to make known their loyalty to the king.<sup>6</sup> Colenso and his supporters believed that by supporting the appointed chiefs in opposition to the Usutu the authorities were encouraging plunder and violence and denying the Zulu people any chance of achieving their fervent desire - the restoration of Cetshwayo which would bring peace to Zululand.

The support given to the Usutu by the zealots at Bishopstove had a significant effect on the civil strife and the official attitude towards the Zulus who supported the king. Time after time, much to the annoyance of government officials, the Usutu came to lay their complaints before the Bishop and ask his advice. The officials, knowing Colenso's attachment to Cetshwayo's cause, believed that the advice he gave them encouraged them to revolt against the appointed chiefs and create disturbances in order to discredit the settlement and effect the restoration of Cetshwayo. This would ensure that they

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5. Brookes and Webb, op.cit., p.112.

6. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.x-xii.

were reinstated in position of power and favour in Zululand. Deputations, complaints and petitions concerning their treatment at the hands of the appointed chiefs were regarded by the administration first and foremost as attempts to discredit the settlement, rather than manifestation of legitimate grievances against the actions of the appointed chiefs. Moreover because the Usutu faction saw restoration as the solution to their problems, their deputations were regarded as attempts on the part of a royalist faction to force the hands of the authorities, in order that the Zulu royal house might once again assume political power in Zululand.<sup>7</sup>

The question which plagued interested parties was whether the Zulus as a whole desired the return of their king:<sup>8</sup> the whole issue revolves around this question. The administration said they did not; Bishopstowe said they did; but the question was not answered satisfactorily then and cannot be answered with any certainty now. On the whole the Zulu people seem to have desired one thing: a just, strong, central government with real authority, be it black or white,

7. A great difficulty in this essay springs from the fact that most of the information available on the subject comes from members of these two groups - the administration or the Colensoites - independent observers are rare, although both sides claimed objectivity.
8. It seems to have been possible at the time to collect 'irrefutable evidence' for either points of view. Consider the case of Lady Florence Dixie and Sir Evelyn Wood who were in Zululand at the same time as members of the same party. Both attempted to find out the 'true wishes' of the Zulu people. In G-3182, No.67, Wood to Kimberley, 12/9/83, p.104, Wood writes, "...every Zulu whom I met alone in my ride through Zululand told me, in the course of conversation, the Zulus would not willingly go back to the old system which obtained under Cetshwayo, preferring the present system." Dixie wrote, "It is enough here to remark that, during this pilgrimage of enquiry, I obtained that information which it has been the work of both resident and Government authorities, and interested parties to keep concealed from the public. That information consists in an almost universal desire on the part of the Zulu nation for their king's return. See Lady Florence Dixie, In the Land of Misfortune, (Richard Bentley and Son, 1882), p.396.

noble or common. This security was denied by the colonial policies of the day, and confusion and distortion of the truth was the result. What must be avoided in this essay is the trap into which both white parties were forced - the need to set up one faction as the disturber of the peace and the other as the upholder of law and order.

I hope in this essay I shall be able to avoid the prejudices of the bitterly opposed schools of thought. If the Government officials were at times obstinate and misinformed, in some of them we see men of humanity struggling to do right in a situation where justice was impossible. If the Bishopstowe party were prejudiced in favour of the Usutu, and too ready to interpret delay on the part of the officials as obstruction, and misunderstanding as deceit, we see men and women who, for the noblest motives, were attempting to alleviate real suffering and defeat injustice.

On the 9th February, 1880 a small party of high-ranking Zulus arrived at Bishopstowe saying that they had been sent by Ndabuko and Mnyamana<sup>9</sup> to speak for Cetshwayo and ask the reasons for his deposition, and to complain of their treatment by Zibhebhu.<sup>10</sup>

The deputation also brought a petition from the Great Chiefs on behalf of Cetshwayo's family, who, they said, were living in great misery and discomfort, and were ill-treated and tyrannised over by Zibhebhu, in whose territory they had been placed. This chief had himself 'eaten up' the cattle which should have supported the king's children...and now insisted that the princes, Cetshwayo's brothers, should work for him like common men, and build his kraal, threatening that if they did not obey him in this respect before the next 'moon', he would turn them out of his country altogether.<sup>11</sup>

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9. *Vide supra* pp.13-14.

10. F.E. Colenso, *The Ruin of Zululand*, (William Ridgeway, London, 1884), Vol.I, p.17. This account of the first deputations and their complaints is taken solely from Colenso because the Natal officials were not aware that there was any trouble between the Mandhlakasi and the Usutu at the time. Osborn wrote, "It is to be observed that the acts of oppression complained of commenced after Undbuko's visit to Maritzburg [that was in May 1880] and his intentions became known to Usibebu. Up to that time there was not as far as I know, any open discord between the parties." See C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.34, 23/6/81, Minute, Resident to Wood, 31/5/81, p.37.

11. F.E. Colenso, *op.cit.*, p.18. This passage could be the source of the commonly accepted view that Zibhebhu antagonised the Usutu royalty by making them perform 'menial tasks'. If this is so then we have only the Usutu's word for it. See C.T. Binns, *The Last Zulu King*, (Longmans, 1963), p.181.

The deputation was heard in the offices of the S.N.A.<sup>12</sup> but was told that all complaints must be made to the newly-appointed Resident, Mr. Osborn. Back in Zululand they went to the Resident to complain again of their treatment at the hands of Zibhebhu.

"...a number of Zulu chiefs and headmen went to Mr. Osborne (sic) the Resident, and began to state their complaints to him, but he stopped them, saying that he was not put there to hear such complaints, which they must settle among themselves; he was appointed only to hear and see whether Sir Garnet Wolseley's laws were carried out? (sic). Upon this without entering further into the matters about which they had come - they asked leave to go down to the Natal Government which was granted them in the form of a 'pass' to Maritzburg, in order to proceed to pay their respects to His Excellency."<sup>13</sup>

At the end of May, armed with the pass Ndabuko headed a deputation of 200 Zulus which included, according to Colenso, the representatives of seven appointed chiefs, to interview the officials in Natal who once again told them that all complaints had to be heard by the Resident in Zululand.

By sending the Zulus back and forth the Natal officials were, according to Bishopstowe, "cheating the simple Zulus out of the promised attention to their complaints and prayers."<sup>14</sup> A study of the documents however reveals that while the actions of the authorities might have seemed to have been deliberately obstructive, a strong case can be built up in their defence.<sup>15</sup>

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12. The Acting Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, J.W. Shepstone.

13. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., p.28.

14. Ibid., p.34.

15. It is impossible in this essay to study all the accusations made by the Colenso's against the officials, but one example must be given of how, in spite of their passion for the truth, they could distort the issue at stake. The first deputation was turned away by the Natal officials for fear of encroaching upon the Resident's authority. Shepstone seems to have genuinely feared the consequences of listening to Usutu complaints and assuming the official functions of the Resident, for if the Natal officials did so they "may be placed in most unpleasant positions". See J.W. Shepstone's report of the meeting with Ndabuko, 26/5/80, Zululand Correspondence, Government House Collection, 677. (This collection is henceforth referred to as G.H.) The second deputation was given a pass to "pay their respects" and not to make their complaints to the authorities, and when they began to list their complaints they were refused a hearing on those grounds. As it was, in spite of Shepstone's desire to avoid encroaching on the Resident's authority his meeting with Ndabuko caused an incident which annoyed Osborn and for which he blamed the Acting Secretary for meddling in the affairs of Zululand "without any reference to me". See Osborn to Colley, 18/7/80, G.H.677. What of Osborn's refusal to listen to complaints by the Usutus? Firstly if he had in mind Wolseley's reprimand to Wheelwright (quoted on p.24) for interfering in the internal affairs of one of the territories, he could have easily have taken such an attitude. Even if this were not the case we must remember, that we have only the Usutu version of the incident. They might not have deliberately distorted the truth but



A number of points arise out of the arrival of these two deputations which must be kept in mind when the course of events in Zululand are considered. Firstly, during the ~~year~~ of 1879-80 in the opening months of the settlement, unbeknown to the Natal officials, resentment had grown up between the Usutu and the Maudhlakazi. Later investigation showed that much of this had its origin in the fact that the appointed chiefs had been ordered to collect guns and the king's cattle which were hidden away in kraals all over Zululand.<sup>16</sup> Secondly, the Usutu, on being told by Osborn that he could not settle their disputes because of the restrictions placed on him by the settlement, attempted to seek redress by petitioning the authorities in Natal. In doing so they sought the counsel of the Bishop of Natal and, in the eyes of the officials these deputations took on the colour of political agitation and a pressure group, rather than an attempt to right injustices.

The first British Resident in Zululand was W.D. Wheelright who had previously been a magistrate in Natal. Among his instructions was the following command:

"Whilst always ready to give advice to the Chiefs of Zululand, you will exercise no authority over them or their people. Should you observe in them any departure from the conditions of their Chieftainship to which they assented, you may remonstrate with them, stating to them that you must report upon their conduct to your Government, but you will be careful to issue no orders to them in regard to the matter of complaint."<sup>17</sup>

All matters had to be reported to the Lieutenant Governor of Natal or the High Commissioner, and the Resident's first task was to mark out the boundaries of the thirteen territories and collect the cattle which had previously belonged to the king.<sup>18</sup>

The collection of the king's cattle and of fire-arms was to be carried out by the appointed chiefs. Indeed, seeing that the Resident

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a misunderstanding could have occurred. The officials might be faulted for being short-sighted in their dealings with the Zulus but not, on this occasion, for cheating them.

16. ~~W.D. Wheelright~~ *infra* p.

17. C-2482, No.87, Wolseley to Hicks Beach, 3/9/79, Enclosure 2, Instructions to the British Resident, p.225.

18. *Ibid.*

had no police force at his disposal at that time, they were the only men in Zululand who could have carried out such a task; but to instruct thirteen men who had been newly placed in authority and many of whom were hated for good reason and were known for their greed and duplicity, was to open the door to trouble. In the years to come when the Zulus were recounting the causes of dispute and bloodshed, many were to trace the start of those quarrels to the attempts by the appointed chiefs to collect the king's cattle and the arms and ammunition which were spread throughout Zululand.<sup>19</sup>

It would seem as if during the first few months of the settlement many of the Zulus were bewildered and confused. In October a traveller in the country wrote that

"The Zulus have no confidence in the present settlement of their affairs, and want to know where the Government is going to place their chief, who is to settle their disputes and keep the land quiet."<sup>20</sup>

Rumour was rife and natives from Natal and the Transvaal, claiming to represent the authorities, claimed cattle from the gullible Zulus.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the atmosphere of uncertainty Wheelwright had a comparatively peaceful time as Resident. Only a few incidents disturbed the uneasy calm before the storm. The Usutu and Mandhlakazi rivalry which was just beginning occurred, it would seem, without the Resident's knowledge.<sup>22</sup> Hamu was reported as committing "outrages" on some of his people.<sup>23</sup> Mandela was threatened with deposition for refusing to co-operate with the boundary commission

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19. See W.Y. Campbell, With Cetwayo in the Inkandhla and the Present State of the Zulu Question, (P. Davis and Sons, Durban, 1883), p.14, for one example. The Blue Books offer many others. J.Y. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, (Longmans, Green and Co., 1911), p.226, sets out clearly the foolishness of such a move and its consequences.

20. W. Campbell to Secretary of Native Affairs, 24/10/79. Zululand Archives, Resident Commissioner and Magistrate, Despatches received from the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, Vol.I. (This collection is hereafter referred to as Z.A.)

21. Ibid and Osborn to Colley, 5/11/80. G.H. 677.

22. Vide supra-p.

23. Wheelwright to Bulwer, 4/11/79, G.H.677.

(probably through inebriation rather than insubordination) but escaped by paying a fine of 100 head of cattle.<sup>24</sup> The Border Agent at Umvoti, Mr. Fannin, who informed the S.N.A.'s office that an induna had complained to him that he had been attacked by an impi of Dunns's<sup>25</sup> received a reprimand from Wolseley, and Wheelwright himself was told not to interfere in the domestic affairs of an appointed chief whose action Wolseley considered both 'wise and just'.<sup>26</sup>

"...I would like to point out to your Excellency that a matter such as this is hardly one calling for the intervention of the British Resident. I quite agree with the view John Dunn appears to hold that the reference of such matters of internal government to the British Resident must so weaken the authority of independent Chiefs as to render their effective rule impossible."<sup>27</sup>

Wheelwright, however, did not stay long in his post. Perhaps, as Morris thinks, he saw the writing on the wall "as soon as he had time to take the temper of the country, and realised that his own position, undefined and powerless, was little more than a sham."<sup>28</sup> Melmoth Osborn was appointed as the new British Resident.

"To this...office was appointed Mr. (afterwards Sir) Melmoth Osborn, till then, since the annexation of the Transvaal, the Government Secretary in that territory, and previously well known amongst the Zulus and other South African natives. His task was one of great difficulty, how difficult will perhaps never be fully realised. His position was one in which it was difficult to obtain credit for the trouble he prevented, because of the large amount of trouble that occurred."<sup>29</sup>

One of the first problems with which Osborn had to deal was that of the Usutu deputations. Firmly he told the Zulu royalty that his power was limited and explained that he had diplomatic powers only.<sup>30</sup>

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24. Bulwer to Wolseley, 14/11/79 and 25/11/79, Bulwer to Wheelwright, 4/3/80, Z.A., Vol.I.

25. Bulwer to Wheelwright, 3/11/79, Enclosure, Special Border Agent, Umvoti to acting Secretary for Native Affairs, Vol.I.

26. Bulwer to British Resident, 19/12/79; Enclosure, Wolseley to Bulwer, 12/12/79, Vol.I.

27. Ibid.

28. D.R. Morris, The Washing of the Spears, (Jonathan Cape, 1966), p.559.

29. J.Y.Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, (Longmans, Green and Co., 1911), p.222.

30. Vide supra p.12.

From the Blue Books it would appear that despite minor incidents the settlement was operating well and late in 1880 Colley reported to the Colonial Office that "under the new regime the Zulus are enjoying a peace and an amount of liberty previously unknown to them"<sup>31</sup>, and Osborn wrote that "up to the present time peace and quietness continue to prevail in Zululand."<sup>32</sup>

But these expressions of confidence which can be found in the Blue Books are misleading. Other documents reveal that Osborn, in August and September 1880, was seriously concerned about the situation in Zululand and submitted reports on the settlement in which he suggested that extensive alterations be made.<sup>33</sup> Osborn believed that the only answer to the problem was annexation and the assumption of proper government by Britain. Since this was impossible he suggested that white sub-residents be appointed with each chief, and that a uniform hut tax be collected for the chiefs by the sub-resident and the money be used for public services and for the establishment of civilising institutions like industrial schools.

I feel convinced of the importance of something being done immediately..., in order to prevent anarchy, as the existing state of affairs cannot last much longer without serious results.<sup>34</sup>

Privately Colley agreed with Osborn though he did not submit his plans for improving the settlement to the Colonial Office because "there are some expressions in it as to the unsatisfactory working of the present system which might seem rather to contradict the more generally favourable report given a few weeks ago."<sup>35</sup> Sir Theophilus Shepstone also thought Osborn's suggestions sound,<sup>36</sup> and Osborn questioned some of the chiefs, who liked the idea of having white advisers.<sup>37</sup> In the

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31. C-2783, No.7 Pomeroy Colley to Kimberley, 20/11/80, p.10.  
 32. C-2783, No.7 Pomeroy Colley to Kimberley, 20/11/80, Enclosure 1, British Resident to Colley, 5/11/80, p.11.  
 33. British Resident, Zululand, Minute of working of the Zulu Settlement, 4/9/80, G.H.677.  
 34. Ibid.  
 35. Colley to Osborn (private letter), 27/9/80, G.H.677.  
 36. T. Shepstone, Memo on Osborn's minute, 18/9/80, G.H.677.  
 37. Colley to Osborn (private letter), G.H.677.

light of such correspondence it is difficult to believe the charge made by the Colenso's and others that the officials passively watched, and perhaps aided, the "ruin of Zululand".

On September 17th Zibhebhu applied for permission to go to Pietermaritzburg<sup>38</sup> for, he said, he wished "to satisfy his curiosity."<sup>39</sup> In Pietermaritzburg Zibhebhu saw Pomerooy Colley who found him "an intelligent and well disposed man". Colley also gave him his opinion on the status of the royal family that resided in Zibhebhu's territory.

"I took the opportunity of explaining to him clearly that I did not recognise any claims to chieftainship on the part of Cetchwayo's relations but considered them to be under Usibebu, and he to be answerable for them, precisely as in the case of any ordinary native residing in his district."<sup>40</sup>

Zibhebhu was also interviewed by Theophilus Shepstone. They discussed aspects of the settlement, the trouble with the Usutu and the proposed alteration to the settlement put forward by Osborn.<sup>41</sup>

"Zibebu said they deserved consideration and after thanking me took leave, saying he wished to see all that was to be seen, and that the next day he proposed to go to Durban in the Railway."<sup>42</sup>

Soon after Zibhebhu left for Durban Sir Theophilus received a letter.

"I see Usibebu is here; I heard of a young man stating he had been made his "Prime Minister"; -that the pay was to half the fines inflicted by him; that he had arranged to try all cases as such Prime Minister; that it would be a paying thing; that his younger brother was to stay this side of the Tugela to receive all cattle and produce to realise (sic) as he did not intend to risk keeping them there, and that he would be able to retire in a couple of years or so. This is a fact and I dare say you would like to know it, so I write. The Zulu Country ought to be properly settled; these young fellows will put everything in a blaze before long! Unfortunate Zulu people! No wonder that this Chief hesitated to give hearty assent to my proposals, seeing that they were aimed at protecting the people from his tyranny and avarice, as well as himself from

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38. Osborn to Colley, 17/9/80, G.H.677.

39. Memorandum of Sir T. Shepstone's interview on the 9th November with Zibebu, G.H.677.

40. Colley to Osborn, (private letter), 12/11/80, G.H.677.

41. Memorandum of Sir T. Shepstone's interview on the 9th November with Zibebu, G.H.677.

42. Ibid.

the consequences of them, when he remembered the wicked compact he had entered into with a whiteman to rob them."<sup>43</sup>

Who were "these young fellows who will put everything in a blaze?" The most important of them was Johan William Colenbrander, and amongst the others were Grosvenor Darke, John Eekersley and a man by the name of McAllister. It was Colenbrander who played the most important part in the history of Zibhebhu's battles with the Usutu until 1834.<sup>44</sup>

Born in 1855, the fifth child of a Dutch settler, he left school at the age of thirteen to work as a butcher and then turned to hunting and trading. It is believed that at a very early age he made contact with the Mandhlekazi and traded with them. After serving in the Zulu war Colenbrander went back to trading and was granted a concession by Dunn. Dunn was in close contact with Zibhebhu and it fell to Colenbrander to act as an emissary between them until Colenbrander went to reside permanently with Zibhebhu. In Zibhebhu's territory Colenbrander set himself up as a trader and built himself a store.

"From the beginning Colenbrander was liked and trusted by Zibhebhu and was described in after years as the Chief's advisor and confidential agent..."<sup>45</sup>

With Zibhebhu Colenbrander organised and trained a cavalry squadron of some twenty- of some twenty-five warriors which, according to him, was to protect Zibhebhu's territory from attacks from the tribes to the south. The part Colenbrander played in the civil war became the subject of heated controversy: the Natal officials considered him an agitator whose actions added to the intensity of the civil war and the Colenso's

43. Ibid., Memo, November 13th 1880. This report sent to Shepstone is anonymous. The young man referred to was probably Colenbrander whose younger brother, Henry, would have been fifteen at the time.

44. I have taken all the information on Colenbrander from B.H. Kemp, John William Colenbrander, (Doctoral thesis, University of Natal, 1962).

45. Ibid, p.35.

thought of him as a mercenary bent on looting and plundering the Zulu nation.

Thus by the end of 1880 the stage was set for the civil war in Zululand. The Mandhlakazi and their sympathisers had given offence to the Usutus who had attempted to gain redress by petitioning the officials for the restoration of Cetshwayo. The government officials had committed themselves to support the actions of the appointed chiefs while the Bishopstowe faction had placed themselves solidly behind the royalists. The situation was aggravated by white adventurers who had entered Zululand. In 1881 the civil war began in earnest.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## 1881 : MANDHLAKAZI AGAINST USUTU AND A CHANGE

## IN OFFICIAL ATTITUDES

It was in the northern territories that the most serious outbreaks of violence occurred. In Hamu's territory Mnyamana and his following, and the intensely royalist AbaGulusi tribe<sup>1</sup> complained of cattle seizures and unjust fining. Hamu on the other hand sent messages to the Resident objecting to the fact that many of the people under him refused to recognise him as chief. Soon after Ndabuko returned from his visit to Pietermaritzburg in May 1880<sup>2</sup> Zibhebhu summoned the prince to his kraal and punished him and his followers for making the trip without his authority<sup>3</sup> by seizing some of their cattle. At the same time he exacted further fines, on the grounds that they had been concealing from him some of the king's cattle which he had been ordered to collect.<sup>4</sup> Complaint after complaint was sent by the Usutu to the Resident and by April 1881 it was realised that positive action had to be taken, and Sir Evelyn Wood, who was administering the Government after the death of Colley, telegraphed the Colonial Office requesting that Osborn might 'inquire judicially' into the dispute between Ndabuko, Usiwetu and Zibhebhu, and then report to Wood for his decision on the matter.<sup>5</sup> After this request was granted Wood asked if he could assume the role of Queen's representative,<sup>6</sup> and this too was given.<sup>7</sup>

Thus the realities of the situation in Zululand forced the

1. Vide supra p.13.
2. Vide supra.
3. Memorandum of Sir T. Shepstone's interview on the 9th November with Zibebu. G.H.677.
4. Osborn to Colley, 12/10/80, Enclosure, 2/10/80, G.H.677. Vide supra, p.22.
5. C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.14, 13/4/81, p.24, (Telegraphic).
6. C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.19, 29/4/81, p.25, (Telegraphic).
7. C-3182, Kimberley to Wood, No.21, 30/4/81, p.26, (Telegraphic).



authorities to go against the basic premise of the settlement - that the Resident was to have diplomatic powers only, and that the white authorities were not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Zulu people. It was not that there was any change in the attitude of the Colonial Office towards Zululand,<sup>8</sup> Indeed the disastrous war which Britain had fought with the Transvaal in which the Governor of Natal, Sir George Pomeroy Colley, had lost his life,<sup>9</sup> had only intensified their desire not to assume further responsibility in South Africa. Despite this something had to be done to resolve the disputes between the Usutu and the appointed chiefs, Hamu and Zibhebhu, and Wood decided to intervene.

This is one of the significant events in the history of the period. In donning the mantle of arbitrator the authorities placed themselves in an even more difficult position, for they had not the coercive force at their command to implement their decisions. Too often the party which obeyed an order to lay down their arms was "eaten up" by a party which had chosen to disregard the order. Too often fines went unpaid. Retribution seldom followed beyond the verbal threats and protests of the Resident. Without the necessary force at their command the officials had to watch helplessly as their decisions were ignored, their commands flouted and the guilty prospered while the innocent suffered. When they chose to arbitrate in the Zulu disputes (a "choice" which was in fact forced on them by the very settlement which forbade such intervention) without the ability to put their decisions into effect they found themselves sanctioning anarchy. While the officials spoke in terms of justice and equity, in Zululand might was right and only the fittest survived.

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8. Kimberley, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, reiterates the Colonial Office's determination to stand by the settlement in C-3182, Kimberley to Wood, No.41, 19/8/81, p.66, (Telegraphic).

9. E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Webb, A History of Natal, (University of Natal Press, 1965), p.148 and p.156.

In June 1881 Wood submitted to Kimberley the details of the inquiry held before the Resident in April.<sup>10</sup> In the Resident's presence the Usutu charged the appointed chiefs, Hamu and Zibhebhu with numerous counts of arbitrary seizing of cattle and unjust punishments. Mnyamana and Ndabuko must have spent some time collecting witnesses and evidence to support their case. From this evidence there emerges a picture of months of petty quarrels, skirmishes and seizures. The Usutu party demanded to know why they had been punished for they claimed to have broken no laws and only wished to "sit quietly". Most of the charges centred around the collection of the king's cattle. The Usutu claimed that Zibhebhu had collected cattle which had never belonged to the king and imposed fines for the retention of the king's cattle where none had been retained. Witness after witness came forward to testify that Zibhebhu and Mnyamana had made unjust seizures. When all the evidence had been led Mnyamana stated that a total of 2870 head of cattle had been seized by Hamu and Ndabuko claimed that Zibhebhu had taken 1140 head from his Usutu following.<sup>11</sup>

Zibhebhu defended himself, not by denying the majority of the charges (although he believed them to be exaggerated), but by justifying the seizures in that they were made in accordance with his authority as appointed chief. He had been ordered to collect guns and the royal cattle and he had carried out this order, fining those parties whom he considered had kept these items from him. As chief he arbitrated in disputes and at times fined those parties whom he considered to be guilty of offences. Moreover he claimed that Ndabuko

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10. C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.34, 23/6/81, p.34, and Minutes and Enclosures. This long despatch reveals all the difficulties and confusions of the situation and the extreme awkwardness of the Resident's position. While it appears that much of the Usutu evidence might have been true, the defence put forward by the Chiefs was difficult to counter. This defence rested on the premise that by punishing their subjects they were only acting in accordance with the instructions, and exercising the powers, given to them on their appointment.

11. Ibid., p.41 and p.51.

and members of his faction had been conspiring against his authority, (for instance when they sent a deputation to Pietermaritzburg) and he had fined individuals for this.

The inquiry reveals all the confusions and difficulties of the situation. It would seem as if authority had become divided in the northern territories of Zululand, but not through deliberate agitation on the Zulu princes' part. Whereas, before the Zulu war the judgment of a chief would never have been questioned, the loyalty to an appointed chief was in many cases an artificial thing, and many Zulus who felt they had been unjustly treated by the appointed chief went over to his recognised rivals - in this case the members of the royal family whose prestige sprung from the attitude of many Zulus to the deposed dynasty. It was in this manner that Haiyana and other of Zibhebhu's brothers went over to the Usutu side<sup>12</sup> being forced by their brother's actions to seek support from Ndabuko and Usiwetu.

It is difficult to decide whether the Usutu faction deliberately worked to set up a rival authority. The Natal officials believed that they did, but where can one draw the dividing line between 'agitation', and organisation by the Usutu leaders in order to rectify real wrongs? Ndabuko put the question well when he said to Osborn:-

Usibebu questions my right to bring up the people to count to the Resident the cattle seized from them. Am I not to do so when they are being so extensively eaten up? I have not understood that I am forbidden to bring to notice of Government acts oppressive against the people of Government.

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12. Vide supra, p.4.

The people belong to the Government and the Country also. Those appointed Chiefs have made the country rotten through these acts, and it is completely rotten.<sup>13</sup>

Osborn reported the results of the inquiry and offered suggestions as to what verdicts should be given by the Governor, but before Wood could meet the Zulu people and announce his decisions a bloody upheaval occurred in Zululand.<sup>14</sup> The Amatetwa tribe had been placed under Mlandela, but in July 1881 Sitimela, a native who had previously resided outside Zululand, came into Mlandela's territory and, claiming that he was the son of Dingiswayo, gained considerable support from the Amatetwa and forced Mlandela to flee and seek the protection of John Dunn. Dunn asked the Resident for permission to restore the appointed chief. Osborn managed to keep the situation under control and refused Dunn this request until Sitimela began to "eat up" Mlandela's supporters and assemble an impi of considerable size. He was ordered to disperse this force but refused and Dunn and Colenbrander were given permission to restore Mlandela. Their combined force defeated Sitimela who fled and was never heard of again. Dunn and Colenbrander rewarded themselves with looted cattle.

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13. C-3182. Wood to Kimberley, No.34, 23/6/81, Inquiry K, p.59. Two points arise out of this quotation. Firstly, no Zulu had had the relationship between the authorities and the Zulu people more carefully explained to him than had Ndabuko, both in Pietermaritzburg and by the Resident, and yet he still did not realise that according to the letter of the law 'the people' did not "belong to the Government". Secondly, we can sense, even in this bad translation the wilful surliness and pride of this Zulu prince which so antagonised the white officials - to the detriment of the Usutu cause.
14. Kemp devotes a chapter to the Sitimela rising demonstrating the distortions which occur in the Colenso version of the incident. This paragraph is based on that chapter. Kemp says that the rising "was quite irrelevant to the Mandhlakazi-Usutu rivalry", and this seems to be true except that the Blue Books show that during August some of the Usutu complained that Zibhebhu had seized cattle on the grounds that they had aided Sitimela. See B.H. Kemp, Johan William Colenbrander (Doctoral thesis, University of Natal, 1962), Chapter IV, and C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.84, 14/10/81. Enclosure, Osborn to Wood, 14/8/81, p.140.

On August 31st the meeting at which Sir Evelyn Wood was to announce the results of the inquiry into the disputes between the Usutu and the appointed chiefs was held at Inhlazatshe. In Wood's retinue was Lady Florence Dixie, a spirited and somewhat eccentric woman whom Colenso was soon to recruit to Cetshwayo's cause.<sup>15</sup> Complete with military band and Wood "in full pontificals...so covered in medals as to be almost indistinguishable"<sup>16</sup> the soldiers and officials, faced the 1000 Zulus<sup>17</sup> assembled to meet them. The Zulus had amongst them Dunn and Zibhebhu and four other appointed chiefs, and the representatives of three more. All the leaders of the Usutu were there including Dinizulu. An address on British policy towards the Transvaal evoked no interest. Then the plan, which had originated with Osborn by which he had hoped to effect some improvement in the settlement,<sup>18</sup> was brought forward, but apart from Zibhebhu (who expressed the wish that Colenso should become his sub-resident) little interest was shown and a genuine attempt to better the lot of the Zulu people was relegated to limbo. Wood then turned to the disputes. For intriguing in favour of the deposed dynasty and resisting Zibhebhu, Ndabuko and Usiwetu had to leave their kraals and take up residence under Dunn. On their removal from Zibhebhu's territory the latter had to restore one-third of the cattle that he

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15. This account is based on her report. See Lady Florence Dixie In the Land of Misfortune (Richard Bentley and Son, London, 1882) pp.377-386. The important role played by this violently partisan woman in the restoration of the king, together with an interesting description of the Colenso propaganda machine in action is described in B. Roberts, Ladies in the Veld. (John Murray, London), pp.144-145. The official report of the meeting was attacked by the Colensos on the grounds of the injustice shown in the decisions as far as the Usutu were concerned; the suppression of the Usutu's desire to put their case to the Government; the suppression of their attempt to ask for restoration; and the use of the word "shinga" (scoundrel) to describe the king. The officials denied that the word "shinga" was ever used. For details of this dispute see C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.104, 25/11/81, Enclosures, p.171.

16. Dixie, op.cit. p.378.

17. C.T. Binns, The Last Zulu King, (Longmans, 1963), p.183.

18. Vide supra p.25.

had seized for, Wood said, on making these seizures he had not taken into account that the families of the Usutu might suffer. Hamu was found to have acted too harshly and was ordered to restore 700 of the cattle he had seized from Mnyamana's people.<sup>19</sup> Mnyamana attempted to lodge complaints about his treatment by Hamu but was silenced<sup>20</sup> and the meeting broke up. With all its glamour, pomp and ceremony, the meeting can only be seen as a dismal failure which not only solved no problems but contributed directly to a new outbreak of violence.

The meeting had been held on the last day of August and before the first week in October was out, the Usutu and the Mandhlakazi had indulged in bloody raids and counter-raids. Hamu, moreover, had massacred the Abaqulusi in open battle while the Resident could only protest feebly.

In the first week after the meeting Zibhebhu made an attempt to settle old scores while he still had the chance and he captured some of his brother Haiyana's cattle, presumably before they disappeared

19. Wood based his decisions on Osborn's advice which can be found in C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.34, 23/6/81, Enclosures, p.34 and p.37. His arguments reveal the difficulties of his position. He was convinced that Mnyamana was intriguing against Hamu. At the same time he believed that Hamu had acted arbitrarily and harshly, but the Government had to support their appointees if possible. Osborn also thought that Ndabuko had been antagonistic towards Zibhebhu and plotted for restoration and for a position of power in Zululand. Ndabuko and Usiwetu who had been hoping for the redress of the wrongs they had been at such pains to bring to the Resident in April, found that they were berated for agitating and ordered to leave their homes and their people, and reside under the hated Duma. It is no wonder that they lost all faith in the officials.

20. Wood admits that in his initial report on the meeting "written midnight, after many hours of work, I omitted to mention that, ... Mnyamana complained bitterly of the conduct of Hamu." For this report see C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.65, 31/8/81, p.99. As mentioned in footnote 14 Colenso and Dixie made great play with other alleged incidents of unjust actions towards the Usutu present at the meeting. Whether true or not it does not alter the fact that the Usutu believed that they had been very unjustly treated and that the meeting only intensified the differences between them and the appointed chiefs.

over the border with Ndabuko and his following. The dispute between the brothers had its origins in Mapita's time<sup>21</sup> but seeing that Haiyana had some time previously joined forces with the Usutu it changed from a family dispute to an issue between factions. Zibhebhu claimed that he had given strict instructions that in the raid none of the royal brothers' cattle be touched,<sup>22</sup> but Ndabuko claimed that an impi led by Colenbrander swept through a number of his kraals.<sup>23</sup> Of course as Haiyana's supporters and cattle were being sheltered by the Usutu it is improbable that a raiding party would show such discrimination. Zibhebhu himself admitted that some Usutu cattle had been taken in error but that these were returned later, on his orders.<sup>24</sup> Notwithstanding Zibhebhu's protests that the raid was not against the Usutu, they interpreted it as yet another Mandhlakazi attack (probably with official backing, coming so soon, as it did, after Wood's meeting). The Usutu fled into Mamu's territory some time during September and from there organised a retaliatory raid which must have taken place early in October. According to Ndabuko these raids were the first that the Usutu faction had ever made on the Mandhlakazi and even then they were planned by the hotheads of the faction, unbeknown to him.<sup>25</sup> Frantic messages were received by the Resident on the 6th October from Colenbrander and Zibhebhu saying that they were about to be attacked by Ndabuko's men and they requested that they be allowed to go into Mamu's territory "and clear his troublesome enemy."<sup>26</sup> Osborn replied that if Mamu gave permission he would have no objection if Zibhebhu did this.<sup>27</sup>

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21. *Idem*.

22. Osborn to Wood, 19/9/81, Statement by Zibhebhu, 13/9/81, G.H.677.

23. Osborn to Wood, 19/9/81, Statement by Ndabuko, 9/9/81, G.H.677.

24. Osborn to Wood, 19/9/81, Statement by Zibhebhu, 14/9/81, G.H.677.

25. W.Y. Campbell, With Cetwayo in the Inkandhla and the Present State of the Zulu Question, (P. Davis and Sons, Durban, 1883), p.

26. C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.83, 13/10/81, Enclosure No.5, Colenbrander to Osborn, 4/10/81, p.138.

27. Ibid. Enclosure No.6, Osborn to Colenbrander, 6/10/81, p.139.

But while it seemed to the Resident from the messages he was receiving from Zibhebhu that a full-scale war might break out at any moment between the Mandhlakazi and Usutu, Osborn was already concerned with another more bloody outbreak of violence in Hamu's territory. Complaints by Hamu of Aba Qulusi insubordination, and by the AbaQulusi themselves of unjust treatment at the hands of the appointed chief, had been arriving for some time at the Residency.<sup>28</sup> By September things had reached such a pitch that both sides had raised impis and Osborn's messengers were unable to persuade either side to disarm.<sup>29</sup> Hamu informed the AbaQulusi "that he was authorised by the Resident to deal with any people residing in his territory who might disregard his authority and he was taking action against the AbaQulusi".<sup>30</sup> The AbaQulusi were on a war footing and had assembled their impis by the last week in September. They refused to disarm because they believed that the Resident had given Hamu permission to attack them. Osborn's messengers reported the AbaQulusi as saying:-

...that the Abaqulusi were loyal to Uhamu in every way. That they paid him taxes, and did all he required of them, including the cutting of wood to build huts for him; and that their women weeded his gardens. That they had heard from a man of Uhamu's captured by them that Uhamu was about to attack them with the Resident's permission, the Resident had told him so... They said that the "impi" with them was going to fight Uhamu. That, as the Resident had deserted them, they must fight. We told them that the Resident had not either ordered Uhamu to attack them, or given him permission. Umgani then said: It is the Resident nevertheless who is destroying us, because he does not send a policeman to look after us, and see our faults towards Uhamu.<sup>31</sup>

The Resident's attempts to keep the forces apart were hopeless. On the 2nd October on the right bank of the Bivana river Hamu's forces trounced the AbaQulusi and the remnants of the tribe fled into the Transvaal.<sup>32</sup>

28. J.Y. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, (Longmans, Green and Co, 1911),

p.

29. C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.76, Enclosure, 27/9/81, p.116.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Gibson, op.cit., p.230.



The whole of northern Zululand was aflame and it must have seemed to Osborn that it was only a matter of time before the settlement collapsed. As he was trying to get Mamu's territory under control the messages came through from Zibhebhu and Colenbrander informing him of the Usutu attack.<sup>33</sup> There is a note of despair in his short message to Wood:

My dear General Wood,

I shall not be able to go to Usibebu's. The country from within a mile or two of this, right on, is in such a disturbed state, that even native messengers have to make large circuit round to avoid contact with those within the pale of the disturbance. I should be able to do little if any good, even if I did go, the Zulus understand now that I have no authority.<sup>34</sup>

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33. *Vide supra* p.36.

34. C-3182, Wood to Kimberley, No.83, Enclosure, Osborn to Wood, 7/10/81, p.139.

## CHAPTER FIVE

SIR HENRY DANVER IN PIETERMARITZBURG AND  
CETSINWAYO AT DOWNING STREET

Gladstone's Liberal party came into power in April 1880. In spite of its leader's fierce denunciations of Disraeli's handling of south African affairs, particularly in so far as the problems of Zululand were concerned, there was no change in the policy of retrenchment initiated by the Conservatives after the Zulu War.<sup>1</sup> The new Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Kimberley, kept his eye fixed just as firmly on the Treasury Chest as had his predecessor.

One of the difficulties that Kimberley had to face was the future of the exiled Zulu king.<sup>2</sup> Before the first year of his exile had been completed, the unhappy monarch had on a number of occasions petitioned the British Government to be allowed to return to Zululand, not as a ruler, but as a private individual.

"I do not know what we [the Zulus] have done, and I pray the Queen to let me go back just to live among my children, and let the country belong to the Queen; for though a man be allowed to breathe, he is not really alive if he is cut off from his wives and children."<sup>3</sup>

Although these petitions were refused the king continued writing to prominent men and women in England. In 1881, possibly under the influence of the Colenso's he wrote to Kimberley suggesting that the Zulu settlement be reversed and he be reinstated, and when this plea was rejected he asked to be allowed to travel to England to put his case.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Vide supra, p.8.
  2. I intend to treat the background to the restoration of the king very briefly. For a full treatment see P.D.G. Hees, The Restoration of Cetshwayo to Zululand, (Research essay, B.A. Honors, University of Natal, 1965), from which this account is drawn.
  3. P.E. Colenso, The Ruin of Zululand, (William Ridgeway, 1884) Vol. I, p.60. This quotation is an account by the king of a conversation he had with Frere as reported by the Colensos, but is typical of the sentiments expressed in his letters to influential Englishmen during the first year of his captivity.
  4. Ibid. p.67.

There were other pressures on the Colonial Office which persuaded Kimberley to reconsider the Zulu king's position. There were the humanitarian agitators led by the Bishopstowe party who had in their ranks such influential people as Lady Florence Dixie<sup>5</sup> and F.W. Chesson of the Aborigines Protection Society. Claiming to speak for the Zulu nation (whose true wishes they believed were suppressed by the official "clique" in Natal), but in fact speaking for the Usutu faction, they questioned and repudiated all official publications and newspapers which did not suggest that the only solution to Zululand's problems was the restoration of the king who had been so cruelly deposed. Their propaganda network ensured that Usutu complaints were heard in official circles in England. Significant also was the official support for restoration in both the Cape and the Transvaal.<sup>6</sup> Moreover Cetshwayo's reaction to Kimberley's refusal to the request in May for his return to Zululand seems to have given the Secretary of State some grounds for concern, for it made the king "feel so heartbroken and despondent that I may...put an end to my miserable existence."<sup>7</sup>

Thus by September we see Kimberley, embarrassed over Cetshwayo's detention, affected by public opinion which in turn was roused by the work of Cetshwayo's white crusaders, probably mindful of the sentiments expressed by Gladstone during the Midlothian campaign, and perhaps fearing the effects of continued detention of the king, granting permission for Cetshwayo to visit England.<sup>8</sup>

As the Colonies had pointed out to Cetshwayo in November of the previous year, once the Colonial Office had committed themselves by allowing the king to visit England, it was difficult for them to return

5. *Vide supra*, p.34.

6. *Ibid.*, op. cit., Chapter III. One should perhaps mention that the Transvaal's first request for restoration came three weeks after the defeat of the Abajulusi by Maza had sent refugees fleeing across the border into the Republic.

7. *Ibid.*, op. cit., p.40.

8. *Ibid.*, p.17.

him to south Africa as a prisoner.<sup>9</sup> Yet what was to be done with him? If one considers the situation in Zululand at the end of 1881 when the settlement seemed to be collapsing, one can understand why restoration was considered as an answer to two problems - the future of the king and the future of Zululand.

Despite the pessimistic tone of Osborn's correspondence with Wood in October,<sup>10</sup> he managed to keep the warring factions apart and persuaded Zikhobhu not to attack the Usutu.<sup>11</sup> But the situation was far from easy. The Usutu had lost all faith in the Resident.<sup>12</sup> Many of them thought that the white officials were encouraging their destruction, particularly since Wood's visit had been followed immediately by attacks from the appointed chiefs.<sup>13</sup>

Notwithstanding a reduction of tension in Zululand reported in December it was realised by the British Government that a workable solution had still to be found if the existing settlement was not to collapse sooner or later, and it was obvious that Cetshwayo should, if possible, be included in the proposed solution. In April 1882 Gladstone was reported as saying:-

"If it should appear that the mass of the people in Zululand are for Cetshwayo, so that something like unanimity should prevail, so far from regarding him as an enemy of England, and wishing him ill, and so far from being disposed to any but the most favourable course that the welfare would permit, I should regard the proof of that fact with great pleasure, and that would be the sentiment of my colleagues... We have done the best that in us lies to obtain the very best information in our power; we have sent to a neighbouring colony a gentleman in whose judgment, ability, and impartiality we have entire confidence; and we have called upon him to lose no time in applying his mind to the consideration of the affairs of Zululand."<sup>14</sup>

9. *Ibid.*, pp.45-46.

10. *Vide supra*, p.38.

11. C-3182, No. 108, Wood to Kimberley, 21/12/81, Enclosure, Resident to Wood, 20/12/81, p.183.

12. This loss of faith is exemplified in P.E. Colenso, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Chapter III.

13. See V.Y. Campbell, *With Cetshwayo in the Interior and the present state of the Zulu Question*, (P. Davis and Sons, Durban, 1883), p.15.

14. *The Times*, 18/4/82, quoted in P.E. Colenso, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p.161.

The man referred to was Sir Henry Bulwer, and he took up his post as Governor of Natal in March 1882. Gibson wrote of him,

"His desire to do right was very strong; the pains he took to inform himself correctly in respect to the position of affairs was very great. The varied and voluminous correspondence which took place is interesting, and contains much detailed information which is useful. But it would not be safe to accept as entirely correct its exposition of the causes that were at work in producing the complications which it was sought to unravel."<sup>15</sup>

Perhaps the hint by Gibson that Bulwer was not entirely correct in his analysis of the causes in the trouble in Zululand was the result of the Governor's attitude to the Usutu. He was convinced that they were at the root of the disturbances in Zululand and were aided and abetted by the machinations of those at Bishopstowe.<sup>16</sup>

At the moment that Gladstone was making the speech quoted above, in which he revealed that Bulwer was to assess the feeling in Zululand towards Cetshwayo, there arrived in Natal the largest of the Usutu deputations.<sup>17</sup> On April 15th 2,000 Zulus, led by Nkululako and Uswetu, were interviewed by the Resident (who was having consultations with the Governor at the time on the outskirts of Pietermaritzburg).<sup>18</sup> Speaking for the deputation Uswetu said:-

"We wish to speak to the Governor about two matters; the one, to ask for the Inkosi (Cetshwayo); the other, to tell him of the killing and ill-usage to which we are subjected. ...We are in such trouble as no other people ever have been. We have no homes, and we have the difficulty of providing food for our children before us. You know the great trouble we are in. We all ask you to help us to see the Governor."<sup>19</sup>

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15. J.Y. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, (Longmans, Green and Co., 1911), p.235.
  16. I think it quite likely that such an attitude might have had its origin in the close contact which Bulwer kept with John Shepstone over Zulu affairs.
  17. Colenso finds it ironic that the very moment that Gladstone made his speech the deputation arrived giving the Governor, in Colenso's opinion, the finest opportunity to discover the true wishes of the Zulu nation. F.E. Colenso, op. cit., Vol.I, pp.161-162.
  18. Ibid., pp.163-169. Chapter VII of this volume gives a full description of the deputation through the eyes of those at Bishopstowe. It is one of the best examples of the Colensos at work; Blue Books, newspaper reports which discuss the episode are minutely dissected and the accusations made by the Governor are refuted in long bewildering letters. Appendix B, p.301 compares the official version of the interviews with Usutu versions. The official account of the "Great Deputation" as the Colensos called it, can be found in C-3247, No.78, Bulwer to Kimberley, 29/4/82, Enclosure 1, British Resident to Bulwer, 21/4/82, p.67, together with Bulwer's reaction to the deputation.
  19. F.E. Colenso, op. cit., Vol.I, pp.303-304.

Bulwer, afraid that an interview with the Usutu might compromise the Government refused to interview the Usutu.<sup>20</sup> Osborn informed them of this and their reaction is worth noting.

"You have always prevented us from seeing the Governor and now you are doing it again. It is the ditch into which you have always pushed us and are trying to push us into now again... I was very sorry as I knew not what I had done to merit the trouble that overtook us immediately after General Wood's decision. General Wood did not write the letters. You wrote them. They are with the Government. I want to see them in Maritzburg, not here in the veldt."<sup>21</sup>

Rightly or wrongly the Usutu were convinced that they had suffered cruel wrongs which the white officials had done nothing to redress - indeed they had punished the Usutu rather than the real culprits. They were of the opinion that they had done their best to keep within the law in the face of the greatest provocation. They had reported their grievances to Osborn and he told them that he had passed on their complaints to Pietermaritzburg, and still they were punished and "eaten up" which made them suspect that the Resident might be misrepresenting them to the Governor.

In Bulwer's mind, however, genuine grievances became identified with deliberate political agitation which, he believed, was initiated at Bishopstowe, carried out by the Usutu and publicised by both as an example of the failure of the settlement and the need for, if not restoration, at least an increase in the power of the royal house. He believed that the Usutu princes were motivated by personal ambition and the hope that a change in the status quo would enhance their position in the country.<sup>22</sup> To deny that these factors existed would be to take up a position similar to that of the Colenses. It is very likely that they did exist but they were of minor importance,

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20. C-3247, No. 73, Bulwer to Kimberley, 22/4/82, p.59.

21. C-3247, No. 78, Bulwer to Kimberley, 29/4/82, Enclosure 2, British Resident to Bulwer, 24/4/82, p.73.

22. C-3247, No. 73, Bulwer to Kimberley, 20/4/82, p.57.

and the "agitation" of the Usutu was based on real grievances which they felt the white officials had done nothing to rectify. I feel that the officials failed to grasp this point while Bishopstowe were too eager to identify the grievances of a faction with that of the Zulu nation. While the Colensos thought that

"In the arrival of this deputation Sir H. Bulwer had indeed, an opportunity to obtain the information desired by the Home Government,<sup>23</sup> without loss of time. Zululand had come to him, to save him a troublesome and anxious visit to that disturbed country."<sup>24</sup>

Bulwer was of the opinion that

"It is a demonstration organised by the "Usuto" [sic] party encouraged, as I have reason to believe from without; and it is so timed as to bear upon the departure of the ex-king for England which it is said, will take place next month."<sup>25</sup>

So convinced was the Governor that the voyage of the king to England would have adverse effects on the Zululand situation that he persuaded the Colonial Office to postpone Cetshwayo's visit to England until he had a chance to visit Zululand and make up his mind as to "the real views and sentiments and wishes of the Zulu Chiefs and people regarding the present settlement and the future of Zululand."<sup>26</sup> By June however Kimberley felt that the visit should not be further delayed.<sup>27</sup>

23. Vide supra, p. 41 .

24. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.I, p.169.

25. C-3247, No. 73, Bulwer to Kimberley, 22/4/82, p.59.

26. Quoted in Rees, op.cit., p.50. Rees discusses Bulwer's decision to ask for a postponement of the king's visit. On page 53 he discusses Bulwer's "customary caution" and says he could find "no evidence to explain why Bulwer did not rely more on Melmoth Osborn" to give him evidence as to the true state of affairs in Zululand. In fact Bulwer did rely on Osborn, who visited him in April when they must have had consultations. I would suggest as a likely reason for delaying Cetshwayo's visit an attempt by the Governor (advised by the Natal officials) to stop the British Government committing themselves to restoring the king until Bulwer had worked out a solution which perhaps did not include restoration but was acceptable to the Colonial Office.

27. There are a number of accounts of this fascinating episode in the king's life, the fullest being that found in F.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.II, Chapter II.

Cetshwayo arrived in England on August 3rd and had three interviews with the Secretary of State for Colonies, Lord Kimberley, in the course of his stay in England. On August 7th Cetshwayo was given the opportunity to defend his actions prior to the Zulu war and comment on the present state of Zululand.<sup>28</sup> The second meeting was of much greater significance. Kimberley informed the king in guarded terms that he was to be returned to Zululand.

"Her Majesty's Government have determined to consider the possibility of making arrangements for his return to Zululand."<sup>29</sup>

The king's restoration, he was informed, was to be subject to a number of conditions. The main body of them were to be basically the same as those which had bound the appointed chiefs<sup>30</sup> but the king was to have with him a British Resident. These terms were accepted by the king, but there was one - the initial one - which caused him great concern and on which the interview centred.

"First, a portion of the country, to be hereafter defined by Her Majesty's Government, will not be placed under his rule, but will be reserved for other purposes."<sup>31</sup>

From this moment until his death this question of "reserved" land deeply perturbed Cetshwayo. At the start of the interview he seems to have expected that he was to be returned to a position similar at least to the one he held before the war. His surprise and shock when he learned that he was to be returned to only a portion of Zululand are obvious. The report gives the impression that Cetshwayo was grappling with problems of diplomacy. He did not want to appear either ungrateful or land-hungry, and yet he was desperately concerned about the piece of territory which was to be

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28. The official reports of these interviews can be found in the Blue Books together with the conditions to which Cetshwayo had to agree. See C-3466, No.61, 24/8/82, and Enclosures, p.105. Miss Colenso discusses the interviews in some detail, adding her interesting but partisan comments. P.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.72-91.
29. C-3466, No.61, Kimberley to Bulwer, 24/8/82, Enclosure 1, p.107.
30. Vide supra, p.12, footnote 12.
31. C-3466, op.cit., p.107.



29th, Colenbrander, writing for Zibhebhu informed Osborn that he was holding his people back from attacking the Usutu and he could never allow the Usutu back into his territory to plant crops.<sup>6</sup>

In August Bulwer submitted a despatch on Wolseley's settlement and his opinions on the proposed return of the king.<sup>7</sup> It was an intelligent analysis which diagnosed the reason for the failure of the settlement and recommended a remedy.

"Look how the Zulus interpret it. They believe that the real permanent authority still resides in the Government which conquered them. Thus to the other people in the territory this chief has no power in himself but represents the greater authority - that of the Government... Here we have the root of the problem. Where the Appointed Chiefs played down their authority all was well. When they were wilful men the situation is difficult. This is what happened with Usibebu and Uhamu... In every one of these cases I am disposed to believe the fault has been more or less on both sides. The appointed chiefs have strained their authority; the others have been little willing to recognise any authority at all... The question is not simply whether an appointed chief has rightly and duly, or wrongly and unduly, exercised a rightfully possessed and recognised authority, but whether he has possessed at all, in the eyes of his people, the authority he has claimed to exercise...

The people do not recognise that the appointed chiefs possess it. The people understand the paramount authority to rest with us, and they will only accept it as resting with us. Our fault in their eyes is that we do not exercise it...

We must, therefore supply what is wanting. We must establish in some form that paramount and supreme authority, ...which is wanting in the Zulu country, and in order to do this we must make some change in the arrangements for the government of the country.<sup>8</sup>

Although Bulwer believed a change was necessary he was against the restoration of the king but, seeing that it seemed to be inevitable, he believed that the Government had to ensure the safety and well-being of all those to whom it had "obligations". This he

6. C-3466, No.91, Bulwer to Kimberley, 8/9/82, Enclosure, Letter I, p.178. Zibhebhu believed that if they returned they would attack his people.

7. Long and detailed, Bulwer's reports are the work of a diligent and painstaking man and he gives an intelligent analysis of the situation in Zululand. C-3466, No.79, Bulwer to Kimberley, 25/8/82, Enclosure, Settlement of the Zulu Country, p.134.

8. Ibid., pp.140-141.

## CHAPTER SIX

## THE RESTORATION OF CETSINWAYO

By June 1882 the Mandhlakazi and Usutu were at each other's throats once again and Bulwer informed Kimberley that a full-scale rising of the Usutu against the appointed chiefs was imminent.<sup>1</sup> Once again Osborn heard complaints from both sides<sup>2</sup> and (in spite of some wavering on Bulwer's part) the officials came to the conclusion that the Usutu were in the wrong.<sup>3</sup> Mbopa and Mnutshwana, two tribal chiefs sympathetic towards the king, were "expelled" from Zibhebhu's territory<sup>4</sup> joining the considerable body of Zulus living in exile on the borders of Zibhebhu's territory. The position seems to have been intensified by the fact that, with the arrival of winter, food supplies were running low and small parties of the exiled Zulus crossed into Zibhebhu's territory in the hope of finding food in their old kraals, and these bands of scavengers frequently skirmished with Mandhlakazi in the district. As the food supplies grew less and the planting season drew nearer the situation became more tense and exiled chiefs began asking for permission from the Resident that they and their people might return to their lands and plant their crops.<sup>5</sup> At the end of July and the beginning of August a new series of fights broke out. The Usutus claimed that their people had to enter Zibhebhu's territory because they were faced with starvation while Zibhebhu saw these foragers as bands of attackers. On July

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1. C-3466, No.28, Bulwer to Kimberley, 17/6/82, p.54.
  2. These inquiries into the nature of the disputes are as confusing as ever. See C-3466, Bulwer to Kimberley, No.58, 21/7/82, Enclosures and Statements, p.93, and C-3466, No. 69, Bulwer to Kimberley, 27/7/82, Enclosures and Statements, p.116.
  3. C-3466, No.69, Bulwer to Kimberley, 27/7/82, p.116.
  4. Ibid., Mbopa's followers were accused of burning down Cobrandler's store according to the statement of Zibhebhu's messenger.
  5. C-3466, No.88, Bulwer to Kimberley, 6/9/82, Enclosure 1, 5/8/82, p.171.

29th, Colenbrander, writing for Zibhebhu informed Osborn that he was holding his people back from attacking the Usutu and he could never allow the Usutu back into his territory to plant crops.<sup>6</sup>

In August Bulwer submitted a despatch on Wolseley's settlement and his opinions on the proposed return of the king.<sup>7</sup> It was an intelligent analysis which diagnosed the reason for the failure of the settlement and recommended a remedy.

"Look how the Zulus interpret it. They believe that the real permanent authority still resides in the Government which conquered them. Thus to the other people in the territory this chief has no power in himself but represents the greater authority - that of the Government... Here we have the root of the problem. Where the Appointed Chiefs played down their authority all was well. When they were wilful men the situation is difficult. This is what happened with Usibebu and Uhama... In every one of these cases I am disposed to believe the fault has been more or less on both sides. The appointed chiefs have strained their authority; the others have been little willing to recognise any authority at all... The question is not simply whether an appointed chief has rightly and duly, or wrongly and unduly, exercised a rightfully possessed and recognised authority, but whether he has possessed at all, in the eyes of his people, the authority he has claimed to exercise...

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8. Ibid., pp.140-141.

felt could best be done by annexing Zululand but since this was impossible a compromise solution had to be formulated. Therefore the Governor recommended that part of Zululand be proclaimed a "reserved territory", under a representative of the Queen, to which those Zulus who had reason to desire not to be under Cetshwayo's rule might move.

"The main principle is the establishment in it <sup>the</sup> reserved territory/ of our authority and protection. This in some form is absolutely necessary. Without it no system that we could devise for the country would be worth the paper upon which it was written. It is the indispensable condition for the government of the country, and to restore the authority of the ex-king in one portion of the country without establishing our own authority in the other portion would be as fatal as it would be useless."<sup>9</sup>

Bulwer stressed this point again and again. British authority in the Reserve should not be "passive", but an "active, moving, guiding and controlling power" to which the people could "rally in confidence and loyalty."<sup>10</sup>

In September Osborn advised Bulwer not to visit Zululand until the time came for the official announcement of Cetshwayo's restoration and suggested that they meet at Burke's Drift on the Natal-Zululand border.<sup>11</sup> The meeting was not fully reported<sup>12</sup> but it would seem that late in September Bulwer arrived on the border together with John Shepstone. Mnyamana, Ndabuko and Uciwetu were

9. Ibid., p.150.

10. Bulwer had his doubts about such a scheme but felt that since Britain was determined to restore the king and determined not to assume control over all the country it was the only possible solution. "The truth is we are in a position which is beset on all sides with difficulties and objections. Our choice lies between them. It is not a question of choosing between advantages and disadvantages. The whole situation is made up of disadvantages, and we have to make our choice out of them." Ibid., p.149.

11. C-3466, No.105, Kimberley to Bulwer, p.197.

12. The Blue Books give only the briefest account of this meeting. Colensoes give three Usutu accounts of this meeting with the princes, which include the information that John Shepstone was with the Governor at the time.

called and they were told that the Usutu princes were to be returned to their kraals in Zibhebhu's territory, and under pressure Zibhebhu agreed to this. Clearly the officials were trying to get the Zulu country into some semblance of order before the king arrived and when one reads Bulwer's next long despatch to the Colonial Office one can understand their actions at Nerke's Drift.

Soon after the Governor returned to Pietermaritzburg he forwarded his suggestions to Kimberley.<sup>13</sup> The most important point in this long report is the recommendation (proposed originally by Osborn<sup>14</sup>) that Zibhebhu be left as an independent chief. Bulwer seems to have been strongly influenced by Osborn's fear that if the king were restored to the whole country, the Usutu would take their revenge on the Mandhlakazi whose geographical position denied them any choice of moving into the Reserve.<sup>15</sup> Moreover Zibhebhu was liked and trusted by the officials and it was believed that he was powerful enough to hold his own.<sup>16</sup>

"As an appointed chief, Usibobu has not been altogether free from his share of blame in respect of the authority he exercises towards the brothers Ndabuko and Usivetu... But of Usibobu's general conduct the Resident speaks in the highest terms, and holds a very decided opinion not only as to the propriety but as to the expediency of leaving him in an independent position."<sup>17</sup>

Ndabuko and Usivetu were to be sent back to their kraals in Zibhebhu's territory and he was to be compensated with the territory over which Mcojana had been appointed but which he had never occupied.<sup>18</sup> Cetshwayo's territory was to consist of that which had belonged to

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13. C-3466, No.106, Bulwer to Kimberley, 3/10/82, p.197.

14. Ibid., Enclosure 1, Memorandum for Sir Henry Bulwer.

15. See the map, Appendix II. Reference to this map (one used by officials at the time) which shows the location of the thirteen territories, over which is superimposed Bulwer's suggested division of the country, together with the actual divisions decided on by the Colonial Office, clarifies Bulwer's analysis considerably.

16. C-3466, No.106, Bulwer to Kimberley, 3/10/82, p.200.

17. Ibid., p.199.

18. Vide supra, p.13.

Umasi, Mankelo, Mlandela, Mgitsho, Mfanawondlela, Tshingwayo, and a portion of Sekotwayo's plus the Usutu kraals in Zibhobhu's mentioned above. The Reserve territory was to consist of the land which had been given to Duma, Ilubi, Fala and the remainder of Sekotwayo's territory. Any of the Zulus residing in Cetshwayo's territory who might wish to move away from his rule would be able to do so and come under the protection of the British authorities in the Reserve, which would be declared as being under British protection and authority as soon as possible. Zibhobhu's new boundaries were to be beacons off "in such a complete manner as may prevent any possible misunderstanding."<sup>19</sup>

Kimberley congratulated Bulwer on his "able and comprehensive reports" and informed him that Her Majesty's Government found themselves in complete agreement with his analysis of the causes of the unrest in Zululand.<sup>20</sup> Moreover as it was impossible for the Colonial Office to "add the whole of Zululand to the long list of native territories brought during recent years under the British rule, the government of some of which has become a source of serious weakness and embarrassment", the only alternative was, as Bulwer had suggested, the partial restoration of Cetshwayo. In fact the only significant changes which the Colonial Office made to Bulwer's proposals were on those points which the Governor had stressed must not be altered. Kimberley decided that the Reserve territory was too large and should be reduced to consist only of that territory which had previously belonged to Duma and Ilubi. He found he could not sanction the use of the term "protected territory" so far as the Reserve was concerned as it implied that "the inhabitants are to depend for defence not on themselves, but on British power."<sup>21</sup> It is obvious that Britain, in spite of Bulwer's earnest injunctions,

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19. C-3466, loc.cit., p.209.

20. C-3466, No.114, Kimberley to Bulwer, 30/11/82, p.216.

21. Ibid., p.217.

did not intend to assume any more real responsibility for the "Zulu Native Reserve", than they had for the thirteen kinglets.

Dulver's complaints to the Earl of Derby, who had replaced Kimberley as Secretary of State for the Colonies in December 1882, were of no avail.<sup>22</sup> He pleaded eloquently for the assumption of real responsibility in the Reserve. He had, he wrote, realised that his proposals had involved the assumption of responsibility:-

"But from responsibility we could not escape. We were, as a matter of fact, already possessed of it, and it was very certain that we could not get rid of it; that we could not escape from either present or future responsibility by simply restoring Cetshwayo to Zululand, by retiring from the Zulu country, and by leaving it to him. Do what we could we could not escape from responsibility for such an act on our part...still less could we escape from the moral responsibility, the more responsibility that would attach to us for every consequence of that act, for individual hardship or suffering that resulted from it, for every human life taken or lost by reason of it."<sup>23</sup>

But no change was to be made. Derby replied:-

"The details of the proposed arrangements, including those points on which the views of Her Majesty's Government differed from your own, have been fully examined in previous correspondence, and there seems to be no necessity for further discussion of them at present..."<sup>24</sup>

British responsibility in the Reserve was kept to a minimum and Cetshwayo was to be restored to the larger area. But the most disturbing part of the proposed restoration was the king's attitude to his proposed return to Zululand which became apparent when the final details were put to him in the Cape.

It fell to Sir Hercules Robinson, High Commissioner for South Africa and Governor of the Cape, to inform Cetshwayo of the final conditions decided upon by the Colonial Office. Cetshwayo's opposition to the plan which proposed to divide Zululand became obvious during the course of the interviews, and he signed the conditions, making it clear that he did so because he feared that

22. For some of Dulver's protests see C-3466, No.143, Derby to Dulver, 18/1/83, p.255, and C-3616, No.23, Dulver to Derby, 15/2/83, p.22.

23. C-3616, No.23, Dulver to Derby, 15/2/83, p.23.

24. C-3616, No.40, Derby to Dulver, 12/4/83, p.72.

if he did not, his return to Zululand would be postponed again - perhaps indefinitely. At the first interview on December 7th, 1882 a map of Zululand was placed before the king and he was informed that Zibhebhu was to be left as chief in the north and that the territories which had previously been ruled by Dunn and Hlubi were now to be placed out of Cetshwayo's rule as the Zulu Native Reserve.<sup>25</sup> The king's reaction to this is worth quoting in full -

"Cetywayo (through Mr. Dunn) - I have heard all you have to say and I thoroughly understand it, I also understand what was said to me by Lord Kimberley in England and I know the replies I gave him. I thoroughly understand all you have said to me.

Sir Hercules Robinson - Do you wish for any further explanation upon any of these points?

Cetywayo - Yes I understand all the explanations you have given me today, but I do not wish to make any reply till I get back to the Zulu country. I will meet all my great men there and shall know all those who would like to leave the country that is set apart for me to govern. When I hear what my great men have to say then I will make a reply.

Sir Hercules Robinson - That will not do, because unless you agree to the conditions of the Home Government, the conditions I have explained to you, you would not be able to go back. Your restoration is dependent upon your acceptance of these conditions.

Cetywayo - I belong to the Queen as much as anyone else who lives in this Colony does. If I do not give any reply until I get back to the Zulu country it will be all the same. In the Zulu country I will be the Queen's, as I am the Queen's now. It frightens me so much, that I am afraid I will never get back to the Zulu country; I would like to make a reply when I have got back and heard what my great men have to say. I belong to the Queen, I always did and do now, and I will abide by everything she says."<sup>26</sup>

Cetshwayo stuck to this position. He complained that the reserve was the richest part of the country and the home of "real" original Zulus" and he would not commit himself until he had had discussions with his "great men."<sup>27</sup> Cetshwayo was urged by Robinson to think

25. These significant interviews are to be found in C-3466, Robinson to Kimberley, No.138, 11/12/82, Enclosure 2, p.243.

26. Ibid., p.245.

27. Towards the end of this first interview he realised that if he wanted to see Zululand again he would have to accept these conditions and Robinson was almost irresponsible when he tried to force Cetshwayo into signing. "Any day you like you can come and give me a formal engagement. The sooner it is done the sooner you will get away. When you sign the conditions we will order all the arrangements to be made. Cetywayo - I would be willing to write my name today if you asked me to do so."



things over for a few days<sup>28</sup> and on the 11th December another interview was held at which Cetshwayo agreed to the conditions of the new settlement making it clear that he was doing so in order that his return to Zululand might not be delayed.

"Sir Hercules Robinson - I suppose you have read the paper I gave you on Thursday?

Cetywayo - Yes.

Sir Hercules Robinson - Have you any remarks now?

Cetywayo - I have no reply to make today. I have merely come to put my name to the paper. The day when I saw you at Wynberg I wanted you to try and get the reserved territory reduced. Today I have come to put my name to the paper."<sup>29</sup>

After first asking if his interpreter could sign for him, Cetywayo X signed the document. It is clear that in allowing his return to Zululand when they realised his antagonism to the arrangements, the officials were taking a serious risk. Nonetheless Cetshwayo arrived in Zululand on 10th January 1884.

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28. In his defence of his later actions Cetshwayo after giving an accurate account of the interviews said, "Mr. Saul Solomon, at the Cape, was a friend of mine, and he advised me to accept under protest and get back to my country, and that constitutional means would be found to put things right."

See W.Y. Campbell, With Cetshwayo in the Inkandla, and the present state of the Zulu Question, (P. Davis and Sons, Durban, 1883), pp.8-9.

29. C-3466, No.138, Robinson to Kimberley, 11/2/82, Enclosure 3, p.248.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## CETSHWAYO IN ZULULAND

While Sir Hercules Robinson was informing the unhappy king of the conditions of his restoration the officials in Natal were making feverish attempts to prepare for the arrival of the monarch whose return they had opposed. It was decided that J.W. Shepstone should become British Resident Commissioner for the Reserve territory and adopt "such preliminary measures as may be necessary to establish the new order of things",<sup>1</sup> and his brother, Sir Theophilus, was to supervise the installation.<sup>2</sup> Henry Francis Fynn II was to be the British Resident with Cetshwayo.<sup>3</sup>

The story of the king's restoration is a tragic one. Most of our information on the subject comes from people who felt that the restoration was a disaster because of the actions of certain personalities. The Natal officials were unanimous in their belief that Cetshwayo brought about his own downfall by refusing to keep the conditions he signed in the Cape<sup>4</sup> and that he was encouraged in this by the Bishopstowe moddlers. The Colensoes believed that the king was returned under conditions which had been deliberately framed with the hope that it would be impossible for the restoration to succeed.

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1. For the official instructions to these men see C-3466, No.154, Bulwer to Kimberley, 3/1/83, p.274, and No.155, Bulwer to Kimberley, 3/1/83, p.277.
  2. These appointments were the subject of bitter attacks on the part of the white supporters of the king. J.W. Shepstone's treachery in the "Mthiyama affair" (E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Webb, A History of Natal, (University of Natal Press, 1965), p.114 had not been forgotten by the Colensoes or the Zulus. The Colensoes believed that in the Reserve could be seen "the well-known Shepstonian project of a Black Kingdom beyond Natal, into which, many years before, Sir T. Shepstone himself contemplated leading off the native population of Natal to make room for the increasing number of whites." For this, and an "exposure" of an attempt by Sir Theophilus to use his influence to increase his brother's salary see F.E. Colenso, The Ruin of Zululand, (William Ridgway, 1884), Vol.II, p.210 and p.246.
  3. C-3466, No.137, Darty to Bulwer, 2/1/82, p.239. His father had been associated with the Zulu royal house under Shaka.
  4. See C-3705, No.4, Bulwer to Darty, 23/4/83, for a particularly good example of this viewpoint, p.5.

They attempted to prove that the officials, by falsifying reports and coercing the Zulus, tried to persuade the Home Government that the Zulus had no desire to live under the king, preferring the Reserve.<sup>5</sup> Moreover the Colensos accused the officials of making it appear that the king had broken his conditions when, in their opinion, <sup>he had not,</sup> and by then "persecuting" those whites in Natal who tried to tell the true story.<sup>6</sup>

Neither of these two views give a true picture of the events and it is more profitable to consider not so much the actions of the individuals involved, but the problems that existed in the Zulu country before the arrival of the king and after the new settlement had been proclaimed. Although the actions of certain individuals made the situation in Zululand worse, in the final analysis it was the difficulties which sprung from the fact that it was virtually impossible to bring peace to Zululand without a strong, centralised authority over all Zululand, with effective forces of coercion at its disposal, which caused the collapse of the first and the second settlements. This is the theme that runs through the history of Zululand in the period that followed the war. The officials had no real power in the country - advise, cajole, arbitrate as they like, their decisions could not be enforced. They could not punish those who went against their wishes any more than they could support those who obeyed them. It must be remembered that although, according to the letter of the law the officials in Zululand were still only "the eyes and ears of the Government" the realities of the situation had forced them to put their

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5. Once again the question hinges on the problem of the nature of the "true wishes" of the Zulu people. I have already discussed the difficulties that this involves on p.19, but for further examples see C-3616, No.31, Bulwer to Derby, Enclosure, 27/2/83, p.43, para. 16-17 in which Shepstone writes that apparent contradictions in Zulu statements on their feeling towards the king "are the natural result of the perpetual sense of insecurity and uncertainty which has been the experience of every unfortunate Zulu in Zululand from Childhood to the present moment." and J.Y. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, (Longmans, Green and Co., 1911), pp.238-9.
6. For the Colensos indictment of the officials see F.E. Colenso, *op. cit.*, pp.236-237.

purely diplomatic role aside and they became deeply involved in the happenings in Zululand - an involvement which could gain them nothing but distrust and blame from all sides.

Cetshwayo returned to a country in which there had arisen bitter enmity, particularly between the Usutu and the Mandhlakazi. The Usutu who had been under Zibhebhu and had been turned off their tribal lands felt they had been treated most cruelly and, no doubt, had plans for revenge. Hamu, who was once again under Cetshwayo's rule, had massacred the king's personal tribe. As the king was returning, the Abaqulusi, probably heartened by the news, turned again on Hamu.<sup>7</sup> As Cetshwayo said of his restoration:-

"I did not land in a dry place. I landed in the mud... You speak of my coming and fighting being timely. I came and found long-standing feuds and bitterly opposed enemies. There are no new feuds since I came."<sup>8</sup>

It was therefore unlikely that, even if Cetshwayo had wanted peace, he could have stopped his followers from attempting to redress past grievances. Moreover, despite Bulwer's attempts to make Zibhebhu allow Ndabuko and Usiwetu to return to their kraals before the king arrived, the Usutu princes refused unless their followers could return to their kraals as well.<sup>9</sup> This troublesome strip of territory just to the north of the Black Umfolosi, which was taken from Zibhebhu and placed under Cetshwayo's rule, did not include all the Usutu in the area. This became apparent once the boundary line between the Mandhlakazi and the Usutu was laid down, when Zibhebhu expelled more Usutu who, unknown to the officials, had still been residing in his territory.

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7. J.Y. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, (Longmans, Green & Co., 1911) p.224.

8. W.Y. Campbell, With Cetshwayo in the Inkandhla and the present state of the Zulu question, (P. Davis and Sons, Durban, 1883), p.11.

9. C-3466, No.134, Bulwer to Kimberley, 24/11/82, Enclosure, Resident to Bulwer, 3/11/82, p.236.

The boundary line itself was the cause of great controversy. Bulwer had stressed the importance of marking out the line quickly, with witnesses from both sides, under the supervision of the Resident.<sup>10</sup> Despite Bulwer's strict instructions, the condition of the country made it impossible for the Resident to accompany the surveyor,<sup>11</sup> Mr. Bustace Fannin, who left for the area early in January. Zibhebhu and some followers were present when the beacons were laid and made a very good impression on the surveyor.

"The Chief and his people were exceedingly civil, and rendered me cheerfully all the assistance I required building beacons, etc."<sup>12</sup>

As the surveying party with its Mandhlakazi helpers made its way across the hills the Usutu watched at a distance.

"Of course we did not go near. We were never asked, and we were not going to go where Usibobu was."<sup>13</sup>

The Usutu claimed to the end that they were not shown the boundary. Fynn tried to point it out to them. It had only been laid a week when Fynn asked for a map in order that he might explain its limits to the king and his followers. When he managed to get hold of a map the Usutu protested that they could not understand what he was talking about.

"We cannot understand these boundaries, and they must have been defined by those who have never been there, or have any knowledge of the country or its relative occupation."<sup>14</sup>

Bulwer interpreted these complaints on the part of the Usutu as typical of their obstructionist attitude, but a few months later he was informed by Mr. Fannin that the map was inaccurate in so far as the area in which

10. C-3466, No.153, Bulwer to Kimberley, 3/1/83, and Enclosures p.271, et seq.
11. C-3616, No.19, Bulwer to Derby, Enclosure 1, Resident to Bulwer, 5/1/83, p.19.
12. C-3705, No.36, Bulwer to Derby, 9/5/83, Enclosure 1, Fannin to British Resident, 14/1/83, p.56.
13. Campbell, op.cit., p.17.
14. C-3616, No.36, Bulwer to Derby, 6/3/83, Enclosure 1, Fynn to Bulwer, 6/2/83, p.66.

the boundary lay was concerned.<sup>15</sup> It does not seem as if the Resident was ever given a chance to explain the boundary clearly to the Usutu.

Another difficulty which faced those responsible for settling Zululand was the whereabouts of the royal cattle. Osborn returned 311 head to the king on his arrival<sup>16</sup> but this must have been a very small percentage of the herds that had previously been in his possession. Osborn had discovered that Wheelwright had allowed Dunn to buy many of them but he had put a stop to that.<sup>17</sup> Mamu and Zibhebhu were accused of having others; whether this were true or not Cetshwayo complained continually that they had been stolen by his enemies. He would not have minded if the Government had confiscated them but not his "dogs".<sup>18</sup> The question of the whereabouts of these cattle was a constant source of trouble.<sup>19</sup>

The success of the plans for Cetshwayo's return hinged on the free movement of Zulus from one territory to another. The idea that this free movement would be acceptable to the Zulus seems to have rested on a false presumption. Attachment to tribal lands seems to have been very strong, both for practical and emotional reasons.

"The actual removal, either way would have been a serious matter. It would have involved the abandonment of land that had been enriched by long occupation for that which would probably be found unfruitful for some years. Much of the land on the hill-sides of Zululand is of very poor quality. Cereals will not grow upon it without artificial fertilization. Zulu's fertilise their lands by planting their crops on old kraal sites. The value of a locality to the occupiers increases with the number of these fertilised spots, and migration often entails a period of scarcity. The inducement to migrate would require to be very strong, and that of sentiment would seldom, in itself, be sufficient to cause a people to risk the prospect of hunger following their chief."<sup>20</sup>

15. C-3705, No.36, Bulwer to Derby, 9/5/83, Enclosure 1, Fannin to British Resident, 14/1/83, p.56.

16. C-3616, No.31, Bulwer to Derby, 5/3/38, Memorandum No.1, p.59.

17. C-3466, No.133, Bulwer to Kimberley, 18/11/82, p.233.

18. C-3616, No.53, Bulwer to Derby, 26/3/83, Enclosure 1, Fynn to Bulwer, 26/3/83, p.99.

19. Bulwer had realised this for some time. "I need not point out to you the danger there is of future questions and difficulties arising out of the unlawful possession of royal cattle by any of the Zulu Chiefs...", C-3466, No.160, Bulwer to Kimberley, 12/1/83, Enclosure 2, Bulwer to Resident, 30/12/82, p.202.

20. Gibson, op.cit., p.243.

Added to this there does not seem to have been a sufficient amount of land to allow the movement of one tribe to another area without encroaching on the lands of another tribe.

"They [the Reserve Chiefs] all complain bitterly of the changes now made without in any way consulting their feelings. Should all these Chiefs come into the Reserved Territory and be followed by any number of their people, room will not be found for them."<sup>21</sup>

There seems to have been a strong emotional attachment to the "land of their fathers" on the part of the Zulus; thus the chiefs in Cetshwayo's territory who did not support him were placed in just as awkward a position as those in the Reserved Territory whose complaints I quoted above.

"These messengers say that if the present arrangement is carried out they (the Chiefs) will be driven from their homes, their people, and their crops, and must become wanderers, as they will not find room in the Reserved Territory, and cannot live under Cetshwayo, and ask 'Is it true that you people now find that Cetshwayo has done no wrong? What wrong have we done that we are to be driven from our homes?'"<sup>22</sup>

One last point must be mentioned in this discussion on factors which led to the failure of the restoration of the king through the inability of the officials to devise a settlement which would keep the Usutu and Mandhlakazi from continual warring - the complete lack of trust Cetshwayo had developed towards the officials.<sup>23</sup> This was partly due to the fact that the Resident was powerless to show any real support for injured parties as he did not have the force at his command to punish offenders, but largely due to communications between the king

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21. C-3616, No.8, Bulwer to Kimberley, 19/1/83, Enclosure, J.Shepstone to Bulwer, 12/1/83, p.7.
  22. C-3616, No.9, Bulwer to Kimberley, 22/1/83, Enclosure, J.W.Shepstone to Bulwer, 14/1/83, p.7. The point is that the Zulus considered removal not as a solution to the problem but as a severe punishment. How is it that the officials, which included the Shepstones, could make what appears to be such a gross miscalculation?
  23. It is difficult to accept Bulwer's conclusion that it was Cetshwayo's deliberate contravention of the terms, above any other consideration, which led to the collapse of the settlement.

and the Colensos. Consider this letter written by the king to an unknown person in England a year before he was returned to Zululand.

"I am coming to you to pray in as much as you are a very great friend of mine, to look more carefully into Zulu matters now. /The Zulus' mouths are shut/ and their feelings suppressed by the Natal people. The same plans are now used to keep me in misery as were used when my country was invaded. I never received the ultimatum, and now the Natal people say that the Zulu nation does not wish me back, although they do. Malimads (Mr. Osborn) has done his best to keep back the Zulu wishes. Mr. Osborn soon allowed men like Usibebu to go to Natal; but stops my brother Ndabuko and those that wish me back, and wish to express the wish of the Zulu nation. ...why does the English Government listen so much to Natal lies..."<sup>24</sup>

It could only have been members of the Dishopstowe party who could have put such ideas into the king's head and such ideas are a gross distortion of the truth.<sup>25</sup> The difficulties that the officials had in dealing with the king must have sprung from the fact that he deeply mistrusted the Natal officials and for this the Colensos must bear a large amount of the responsibility.

Cetshwayo landed at Port Durnford on the 10th January.<sup>26</sup> There were very few Zulus on the beach to meet him. According to Usutu sources the reason for this was that John Shepstone had threatened welcome with bullets.<sup>27</sup> The party led by Theophilus Shepstone and escorted by a troop of Dragoons made their way up the valley of the Umhlatuzi river to Mtonjaneni. Many Zulus visited the procession<sup>28</sup>

24. Letter from Cetshwayo to [?], 21/12/81, G.H.677.

25. In Cetshwayo's statements one continually comes across statements that have a Colenso "ring" about them. Consider paragraphs 11 and 12 in C-3616, No.31, Bulwer to Derby, 5/3/83, Enclosure, 27/2/83, p.42.

26. Anyone who wishes to savour the complexity of the situation and the added confusion caused by the fact that the main sources of information come from the pens of people deeply involved in the situation, each concerned with proving the other side wrong, must read the report of the installation given by Sir Theophilus Shepstone in C-3616, No.31, Bulwer to Derby, 5/3/83, Enclosure, 27/2/83, pp.40-59 and Colenso's answer to it in F.E. Colenso, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.289-415.

27. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., pp.299-302. According to the Colensos this was all part of the plot to make it appear that the king was not welcome in Zululand. If such a threat was made it is likely that the Usutu planned to kidnap the king to save him having to agree to the conditions at the installation ceremony. See C-3616, loc.cit., p.49.

28. C-3616, loc.cit., I have based this account on Shepstone's report of the installation.



and Gibson sums up their attitude very well.

"...it [the installation party] was visited at intervals by men and women, the first giving loud expressions to joy and wonder, the second to wonder only. All were impressed with the desirability of saying things only as would be pleasing alike to the returning king and to those in whose hands he still was. Much uncertainty hung over their immediate future; it behoved them to be wary lest in some way they should bring trouble upon themselves.<sup>29</sup>

Even though they had been summoned the Usutu leaders did not visit the king, their excuse being that they were delayed by Zibhebhu's threats. The Mandhlakazi chief however did visit the camp. With a small body of horsemen Zibhebhu rode into the camp to cries of execration from the Usutu women. This visit to the camp and the statement he made to Shepstone was typical of the chief's bravado. He must have taken a considerable risk travelling through Usutu territory.

"He said that he had come to pay his respects to me, that he felt constrained to do so, although he had been advised to delay coming because the valley of the White Umvolosi was full of the Usutu party, and they would kill him; he did not believe, he said, that they would venture to touch him, and they had not, for he had come safely through them. He denied having any of Cotywayo's cattle, or that he had contemplated or had given any reason to the Usutu party to suspect that he had contemplated attacking any of them, and that party knew full well, he said, that both allegations were untrue; he added, 'I know my boundaries, and unless the Government order me, I will not overstep them; but if they are invaded I shall defend them, and the invaders must take the consequences!...' After staying more than an hour in camp he rode across the open country towards the Ulundi valley on his way home. I felt for his safety, but those who knew him better than I did, especially Mr. Osborn, said that he was far too clever for his enemies, and would not give them time to mature any combination against him, that his promptness and dash would carry him safely through, and so they appear to have done."<sup>31</sup>

According to Shepstone's report the installation ceremony was hindered by the actions of the Usutu party who were arming and gathering in great numbers near the camp, and by their leader's refusal to meet the king. Nevertheless the installation was carried out without any outbreak of violence.

29. Gibson, op.cit., p.240.

30. A phrase which prompts an innuendo from the Colensoes. F.E.Colenso, op.cit., p.348.

31. C-3616, loc.cit., p.50.

At the ceremony the Usutu leaders complained bitterly of the manner in which Cetshwayo was restored. Forty Zulus spoke, the majority of them against the terms of the new settlement.

Dabulamanzi's tirade certainly had an element of truth in it.

"Do you say that we are to move. Where will you put us, then, since you are eating up all Cetshwayo's land? Tell us where you fix Zibobu's boundaries. Why do you come and give the land to the very people who have been killing us? Do you approve of their bloodshedding? You have come to kill him, not to restore him."<sup>32</sup>

Shepstone cut him short, saying in his report that

"...this created a sensation among the younger portion of the audience, and was calculated, if not intended, to excite hostility to Usibebu and contempt for Her Majesty's Government, and especially for that of Natal. He concluded a speech, full of objectionable declamation, by saying, 'To you Usibebu's blood is as sweet milk, it must be preserved, and taken the greatest care of; while ours is worthless and common, and may be shed by anyone disposed to shed it.'<sup>33</sup>

There was no placating Cetshwayo or the Usutu. Cetshwayo crossed the White Umfolosi to establish his kraal on February 9th.<sup>34</sup> Around him gathered all the Usutu chiefs who had been expelled from Zibobhu's territory or who still had kraals there and were in danger of being expelled. Cetshwayo told Fynn that he was keeping them near him to prevent bloodshed but Bulwer had no truck with such an excuse.

"You will be good enough to inform him that Undabuko and the others are now under his authority, and he will be held responsible for their conduct..."<sup>35</sup>

The theme of Cetshwayo's messages for the next two months was a continual complaint against the reduction of his territory. There was constant trouble during that period; Mfanawendlela, who had been the appointed chief of the area which included Ulundi, complained

32. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., p.396.

33. C-3616, loc.cit., p.55.

34. C-3616, No.37, Bulwer to Derby, 6/3/83, Enclosure 2, Fynn to Bulwer, 15/2/83, p.69.

35. C-3616, No.36, Bulwer to Derby, 6/3/83, Enclosure 2, Bulwer to Fynn, 27/2/83, p.67.

that the Usutu were robbing his people's fields.<sup>36</sup> Then the Usutu assaulted messengers from Zibhebhu<sup>37</sup> and in March Usutu bands entered Mandhlakazi territory, ostensibly to search for cattle that might have been hidden there,<sup>38</sup> and Zibhebhu reported that they had stolen some of his horses, and <sup>were</sup> plotting to take his life.<sup>39</sup> Zibhebhu's reaction revealed a confidence which few other Zulus felt in dealing with the situation.

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"Usibebu wishes to say that <sup>he</sup> does not fear Cetshwayo and that he is quite ready and willing to go and retake his horses, but that he is afraid to do wrong...Usibebu now asks the Government to appoint a white man as a Resident with him, as he wishes to have a witness to see what he does, and that he does what is right, as his only fear is that he may do wrong, and be found fault with by the Government."<sup>40</sup>

These petty disputes between the Mandhlakazi and Usutu sprang from, and increased, the bitter enmity between the factions. Tension rose. On the 23rd March Zibhebhu sent an impi to the kraal of Mabako, an Usutu sympathiser in his territory, to enforce his submission to the Mandhlakazi chief.<sup>41</sup>

Bulwer, at this time, was more concerned with the attitude of Cetshwayo to the Mandhlakazi. He wrote that the king seemed "little disposed, in respect of Usibebu's territory, to abide loyally by the conditions to which he has been restored"<sup>42</sup> and he informed Cetshwayo that if only he "would rest quietly and contentedly and keep faithfully to the conditions to which he pledge his word"<sup>43</sup> there would be no

36. C-3616, No.37, Bulwer to Derby, 6/3/83, Enclosure 1, Fynn to Bulwer, 1/2/83, p.68.
37. C-3616, No.44, Bulwer to Derby, 15/3/83, Enclosure 1, 27/2/83, p.78.
38. C-3616, No.42, Bulwer to Derby, 10/3/83, p.75.
39. C-3616, No.48, Bulwer to Derby, 21/3/83, Enclosure, 5/3/83, p.88.
40. Ibid., Derby's refusal to this request can be found in C-3616, No.59, Bulwer to Derby, 23/4/83, p.110.
41. C-3616, No.77, Bulwer to Derby, 9/4/83, Enclosure 2, Fynn to Bulwer, 25/3/83, p.131.
42. C-3616, No.56, Bulwer to Derby, 26/3/83, p.105.
43. C-3616, No.67, Bulwer to Derby, 29/3/83, Enclosure 7, Bulwer to Fynn, 29/3/83, p.118.

trouble in the land. But his messages could not stop the march of events. On the 28th March Fynn heard that an Usutu impi was mustering and Ndaduko had left the king's kraal. The impi from Cetshwayo's territory was joined by the Umgazini tribe under Maboko and Mnyamama's Butelazi.<sup>44</sup> It is believed that the attacking force consisted of 5000 men and it is indicative of Zibhebhu's skill as a soldier that he enticed the huge Usutu army into the Nsebe valley, where the terrain offered maximum cover and there he ambushed them. The attackers were taken so completely by surprise that even the young mat-bearers were still with the army when the Mandhlakazi fell on them. The Usutu panicked and fled, and in the battle and the pursuit that followed Zibhebhu lost only ten men while the bones of the Usutu dead marked the path of their retreat for years. It is said that in no other battle did the Zulus ever suffer greater loss of life.

The Nsebe valley battle had terrible consequences for the Usutu. "Cetshwayo suffered both the calamity and the blame."<sup>45</sup> Bulwer was convinced that the attack was made with the king's consent.<sup>46</sup> From this moment on the Usutu lost any hope they might have had of sympathy from the officials. All disputes were now traced back to the Nsebe valley attack. Zibhebhu, who had constantly stressed his desire to adhere to the Government's wishes had been given a perfectly justifiable reason to attack his enemies while the Usutu had merely confirmed what the officials had always suspected of them.

I doubt if Cetshwayo's complicity in the attack can be ascertained with any degree of accuracy. The king's statement that

44. I have taken this account of the Nsebe valley fight from Gibson. He has obviously made a close study of the Blue Books and, together with the knowledge he must have gained from the Zulus themselves, has created a much more cohesive account of the confused picture which emerges from the scattered and incomplete official reports.

45. Gibson, op.cit., pp.248-249.

46. For the most comprehensive exposition of Bulwer's attitude see his despatch, C-3705, No.4, Bulwer to Derby, 23/4/83, p.5.

he was in complete ignorance of the attack<sup>47</sup> is very difficult to believe, but I feel that it is necessary to temper Bulwer's conviction that it was made with Cetshwayo "privy and consenting".<sup>48</sup> We must not overlook the fact that the king returned to the country as head of a faction that was eager to avenge itself on what it considered to be its persecutors. To what extent was Cetshwayo controlled by his followers? The following passage from Gibson should be kept in mind when considering the question of the king's responsibility.

"An error prevailed in the minds of the British authorities at this time in the belief which they entertained that the will of the Zulu king was absolute in all matters affecting the people he governed. To some extent this was justified by the assumptions of some of Cetshwayo's predecessors; but the fate of these showed plainly that only those governed securely who governed according to the will of the generality of the people...

It was impressed upon Cetshwayo that he was personally responsible for the keeping of good order, but it must remain doubtful whether he possessed the power to control the development that was in progress. It is certain that, had he done so, he would have sadly disappointed the expectations by which those were actuated who had prayed for his restoration."<sup>49</sup>

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47. C-3616, No.79, Bulwer to Derby, 9/4/83, Enclosure 4, Fynn to Bulwer, 30/3/83, p.138.

48. C-3705, No.4, Bulwer to Derby, 23/4/83, p.5.

49. Gibson, op.cit., pp.245-246.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

THE DEATH OF CHESIMAYO AND  
THE DEFEAT OF ZIMBIBHU

"Unfortunately the materials with which we have to deal in this part of South Africa are so inflammable that once a spark is applied to them it is difficult to say when we can put out the flame; and the unprovoked invasion of Usibebu's territory with the evident object of taking his life or upsetting his authority, the burning of his kraals and the simultaneous attack made upon him from different quarters have roused the fierce feelings of his people and have kindled a fire in the whole of Northern Zululand."<sup>1</sup>

Bulwer's metaphor describes accurately the situation in Zululand during the period following the Usutu attack on the Mandhlakazi. Once the news reached Hamu of his enemy's defeat he turned on the Abaqulusi once again.<sup>2</sup> Mnyamana retaliated for the Usutu and drove Hamu and his people into a gorge where they lay siege to them.<sup>3</sup> The officials did their best to keep the situation under control and Bulwer demonstrated how far they had moved from the idea that the Resident must be "the eyes and ears" of the Government when he asked Fynn to try and keep in contact with Zibhebhu "to stop the first symptoms of any attempt on his part...to proceed to acts of retaliation."<sup>4</sup> But although Zibhebhu did not give free rein to his forces he continued with acts of retaliation and made compacts with chiefs who opposed the Usutu. When reprimanded for crossing his border he defended himself saying that it was necessary for peace to root out troublemakers.

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1. C-3705, No.16, Bulwer to Derby, 30/4/83, p.31.
  2. For this and Bulwer's comments on the violence that followed the Msebe valley fight see C-3705, No.4, Bulwer to Derby, 23/4/83 and Enclosures, p.5.
  3. C-3705, No.57, Bulwer to Derby, 4/6/83, Enclosure 1, Fynn to Bulwer, 25/5/83, p.103. C-3864, No.5, Bulwer to Derby, 18/6/83, Enclosure, Fynn to Bulwer, 3/5/83, p.10. J.Y. Gibson, The Story of the Zulus, (Longmans, Green and Co., 1911), p.251.
  4. C-3705, No.12, Bulwer to Derby, 27/4/83, Enclosure 6, Bulwer to Fynn, 27/4/83, p.25.

"Usibebu says he has been obliged to do these things in his own defence, and to prevent his enemies from again attacking him in his territory where he wishes to remain quiet. He had no wish to go beyond his boundaries against anyone. He asks the Governor to rely that he will always abide by the conditions under which he was appointed and the orders of the Government."<sup>5</sup>

This decision of Zibhebhu's to take things into his own hands is significant. He cautiously, and with some justification, punished those who had acted against him, but of course such punitive measures did nothing to help ease the situation. Bulver was annoyed that the chief in whom he had put so much trust should now openly disobey him, but he was powerless to do anything about it.

"I cannot express too strongly my condemnations of these proceedings on Usibebu's part, /although he was provoked by the "outrageous" attack on the 30th March he drove it back./ That was more than enough, and for him to recommence after several days, the work of retaliation is most unjustifiable."<sup>6</sup>

But Zibhebhu had, in the phrase of a contemporary commentator, "by slowly increasing degrees, tested the elasticity of his leash",<sup>7</sup> and he discovered that it could be stretched to a considerable degree.

Whatever Cetshwayo's role in the bloodshed that had occurred in Zululand it is difficult not to feel some sympathy for the king. His supporters defeated, his reputation as a man of integrity gone, his statements to Fynn over the next three months range from expressions of injured innocence to utter despair and open rebellion.

After Zibhebhu's first retaliatory raids Cetshwayo made this statement to Fynn:

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5. C-3705, No.43, Bulver to Derby, 14/5/83, Enclosure, Osborn to Bulver, 5/5/83, pp.74-75.
  6. C-3705, No.24, Bulver to Derby, 2/5/83, Enclosure, Bulver to Fynn, 1/5/83, p.40.
  7. W.Y. Campbell, With Cetshwayo in the Inkandhla, and the present state of the Zulu question, (P. Davis and Sons, Durban, 1883), p.39.

"[Cetshwayo says that he] is remaining quietly at Undini with the men he has assembled to protect him and keeping the restoration conditions; while Usibebu is breaking them, crossing over, plundering cattle, women and children, and killing people, while he, Cetywayo, makes no resistance and orders his people not to resist, and yet the British Resident, give him no protection or satisfactory replies from the Government to all his appeals and complaints, and has no further hopes or confidence in me or my communicating to the Government."<sup>8</sup>

The king continued to complain about the terms of his restoration.

"Cetywayo said Usibebu is his...dog and had been given his, Cetywayo's, country and to be made his equal; would the English ever take a commoner and give him part of England, the Queen's country, to rule over and be her equal over part of her country..."<sup>9</sup>

Bulwer was not impressed.

"With such views as these, with so complete a disregard of the circumstances under which he has returned to the country, with so exaggerated an opinion of his kingly position, the hope of Cetywayo's adherence to the conditions of his restoration becomes painfully less."<sup>10</sup>

By May Cetshwayo openly refused to obey the officials and said, that he

"...can no longer continue looking on seeing his people subjected to this treatment and being killed... That he, Cetywayo, will go to war with them..."<sup>11</sup>

Thus the leaders of the warring Mandhlakazi and Usutu factions were to a greater or lesser extent going against the commands<sup>12</sup> of the officials. Zibhebhu must, to a large extent, have been forced to do so. He was surrounded by enemies: one the one side there was Mnyamane, in the north and north-east it was rumoured that the Swazi and Tongana were about to attack and to the south and south-east the Umpukanyoni tribe under Sonkele were in alliance with Cetshwayo's followers.<sup>13</sup>

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8. C-3705, No.16, Bulwer to Derby, 30/4/83, Enclosure 1, Fynn to Bulwer, 20/4/83, p.32.  
 9. C-3705, No.41, Bulwer to Derby, 12/4/83, Enclosure 1, Fynn to Bulwer, 30/4/83, p.69.  
 10. C-3705, No.41, Bulwer to Derby, 12/4/83, pp.67-68.  
 11. C-3705, No.44, Bulwer to Derby, 15/5/83, Enclosure 4, 9/5/44, p.77.  
 12. The officials did "command" - in the terms of the settlement however they should have only "advised".  
 13. Gibson, op.cit., p.252.



Whether the king had good reason or not to disobey the officials, the officials themselves had no doubt that his motives were partisan and unjust, and not only was he accused of violating Zibhebhu's boundaries, but of <sup>so</sup> interfering with the Reserve territory, and intimidating its inhabitants, that the stability of all Zululand was threatened.<sup>14</sup> In fact the logical consequence of both the powerless settlements was coming about - night was overtaking right as Cetshwayo, in his despair, realised.

"Oh! you Gwalagwala!<sup>15</sup> Who tell us to remain quietly here! Oh! you English people, while our women and children are being killed and our cattle taken, let us go free to protect our families, let us black people fight it out between ourselves."<sup>16</sup>

Bulwer did his best to keep the situation in check. He submitted reports to the Colonial Office pointing out that with Cetshwayo disobeying the conditions of his restoration it was imperative that Britain become responsible for establishing real government in the Reserve.<sup>17</sup> Theophilus Shepstone supported him in this and put forward the thesis that Cetshwayo's actions were planned to "unsettle and weary the minds of the people as to induce them eventually to prefer his rule."<sup>18</sup> Derby, as a result of this pressure, reluctantly gave permission for a show of force in the Reserve.<sup>19</sup>

But Bulwer was not satisfied just with sending urgent pleas to the Colonial Office for he also tried personal intervention. Yet another Shepstone - this time Henriquo, the son of Theophilus - was sent to Zululand with instructions "to enter into communication at the same time with the three principal parties to this disturbance, namely,

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14. Many of the despatches in the Blue Books concentrate on Cetshwayo's interference in the Reserve. This, together with the "agitation" of the Usutu in the Reserve, under Dabulamanzi, can only be mentioned in this essay.

15. Henry Francis Fynn.

16. C-3705, No.51, Bulwer to Derby, 21/5/83, Enclosure 1, Fynn to Bulwer, 10/5/83, p.86.

17. C-3705, No.42, Bulwer to Derby, 12/5/83, p.70 and C-3705, No.51, Bulwer to Derby, 21/5/83, p.83

18. C-3705, No.48, T. Shepstone to Colonial Office, 12/5/83, p.79.

19. C-3705, No.61, Derby to Bulwer, 12/7/83, p.115.

Cetywayo, Usibebu, and Ukama...with the view of averting a renewal of hostilities."<sup>20</sup> His mission did not succeed and skirmishes and reprisals continued.

At the end of June the Usutu under Mnyamana who had been besieging Hamu were removed from their positions, and on the 14th July a raid was made into Zibhebhu's territory.<sup>21</sup>

"This was the act which Usibebu says decided him to bring matters to an issue. There can be no doubt that he saw the storm that was about to burst upon his territory, and that he determined by a bold movement to try the issue of the war at Undini itself."<sup>22</sup>

On the night of the 20th July Zibhebhu led his Mandhlakazi soldiers on a daring 35 mile night march into Cetshwayo's territory and as the sun rose the Mandhlakazi were in sight of the king's kraal.

At Ulundi Cetshwayo had gathered round him most of the men of importance and stature in Zululand. The Usutu warriors gave little opposition<sup>23</sup> as the Mandhlakazi approached the kraal then broke formation and ran through Ulundi setting it alight.<sup>24</sup> Many of the elders and men of stature were old and fell to the Mandhlakazi assegais.<sup>25</sup> Among them were two appointed chiefs, and Haiyana, Zibhebhu's brother, who had joined the Usutu.<sup>26</sup> The king's gifts which he brought from England were looted, some of them appearing soon afterwards in a Durban store.<sup>27</sup> It was the final disaster for the

20. C-3705, No.29, Bulwer to Derby, 5/5/83, p.51.

21. C-3864, No.142, Bulwer to Derby, 26/11/83, p.277.

22. Ibid, pp.281-282.

23. Some say because the young men were out doing normal kraal duties - others give the reason as the effectiveness of the surprise attack or because most of the fighting men were out preparing to attack Zibhebhu. See F.E. Colenso, The Ruin of Zululand, (William Ridgeway, 1885), p.499 and an account (written, I think, by Grosvenor Darke) in The Natal Witness, 2/8/83. This latter account is unpleasantly callous.

24. C-3864, No.38, Bulwer to Derby, 30/7/83, Enclosure, 16, Fynn to Bulwer, 21/7/83, p.69.

25. "Being all fat and big-bellied, they had no chance of escape; and one of them was actually run to earth and stabbed by my little mat-bearers." The Natal Witness, 2/8/83.

26. C-3864, No.71, Bulwer to Derby, 10/9/83, Enclosure, Fynn to Bulwer, 23/9/83, p.156.

27. F.E. Colenso, op.cit., p.500.

king, the Usutu, and, it could be argued, the Zulu Nation. Not only did much of their history die with the old men who were slaughtered<sup>28</sup> but the defeat saw the Usutu turn elsewhere for aid, which was brought at the highest of prices.

Cetshwayo mourned the loss of his followers in the following terms.

"They were men, many my seniors, and favourites of Mpanda, my father, and many of my own age, who had grown up with me, belonging to the same regiment, and our life in boyhood and manhood had been one. But they are not. They have been finished. Count my headmen who have been killed?' asked the King, 'Easier far to count those who have escaped - the few who are still left to me - left with me to hold our mouths in wonder at the way our own Zulu (nation) is being spilt.'"<sup>29</sup>

The king escaped with light injuries, two Mandhlakazi youths being afraid to finish off the head of the Zulu House.<sup>30</sup> For many days he was thought by the officials to be dead but was travelling by night with a few faithful followers until he reached a kraal in the depths of the Inkandla forest in the Reserve Territory.<sup>31</sup>

What was Derby's reaction to the news of the collapse of the settlement and the flight of the king whose government had so recently restored? The Blue Books give the impression that he was not particularly concerned - although he found the situation interesting.

"Although it appears from your subsequent telegram that the report of Cetywayo's death was confirmed, these despatches, which I have read with interest, will form an important portion of the history of recent events in Zululand."<sup>32</sup>

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28. "The destruction of old men which occurred on this occasion rendered it difficult afterwards to find those in the country who could supply from memory accounts of the incidents of the nation's progress." Gibson, *op.cit.*,  
 29. Campbell, *op.cit.*  
 30. *Ibid.*, p.23.  
 31. *Ibid.*, p.23-24.  
 32. C-3864, No.45, Derby to Bulver, 7/9/83, p.82.

The officials in Natal were in a real quandary. What could they do to fill the vacuum that the king had left when he fled his territory? Against a background of bloodshed, despair and anarchy the Natal officials tried desperately to work out a solution which would put things in order, but the Colonial Office procrastinated before finally evading the whole question of responsibility once again.

Once in the Inkandhla Osborn had great difficulty in persuading the king to come out and go to Eshowe. He was believed to be using the Reserve Territory to gather an impi and to intimidate Zulus in the Reserve.<sup>33</sup> The officials had no patience with him.

"Cetywayo has learned nothing, he will learn nothing. He would begin tomorrow the same wrongful course that has brought about his downfall today."<sup>34</sup>

Finally on 15th August Fynn persuaded the king to move to Eshowe.<sup>35</sup>

The question of a new settlement was put off again and again. Bulwer suggested five possible courses to Derby:<sup>36</sup> either to reinstate the king, or recognise Zibhebhu by "right of conquest", abandon the country, extend the Reserve to the Black Umfolosi, or finally to replace Cetshwayo with his son, Dinizulu, under a British Resident. Bulwer then eliminated all but two of the possible courses. It would be inexpedient to restore the king as it would require British troops and, moreover, through his disobedience "he had really forfeited all claims upon our support". To give the country to Zibhebhu was thought by Bulwer not only to be unjust but unwise for the Mandhlakazi would have to assert their authority by force. He also rejected leaving the country to itself as it would be tantamount to leaving it to anarchy. Of all the possible solutions Bulwer thought the best answer

33. C-3864, No.53, Bulwer to Derby, 20/8/83 and Enclosures, p.106.

34. C-3864, No.142, Bulwer to Derby, 26/11/83, p.283.

35. C-3864, No.108, Bulwer to Derby, 23/10/83, and Enclosures, p.227.

36. For the long discussions on possible solutions see C-3864, No.101, Bulwer to Derby, 16/11/83, p.216 and C-3864, No.142, Bulwer to Derby, 26/11/83, p.277.

would be to extend the boundaries of the Reserve to the Black Umfolosi but, realising that it was unlikely that the Colonial Office would be prepared to do this, the Governor settled for the final course - to make Dinizulu ruler of the territory which had been the king's and hedge him around with men amenable to British influence.

The Colonial Office dithered, positive only in their rejection of any solution that might involve further responsibility. Could the Zulus not decide the best possible solution for themselves, Derby asked.

"...I have this day inquired of you...whether it was not possible to ascertain what ruler would be most acceptable to the Zulus outside the Reserve."<sup>37</sup>

Bulwer replied,

"...the Zulu people are not accustomed to select their own rulers, and would not dare express any preference, fearing the consequences of their doing so, but that there is little doubt that generally they would wish to come under British rule, so that they might have peace and good order."<sup>38</sup>

Clearly such a solution was unacceptable to the British Government.

The territory which lay between the Reserve and the Mandlakazi was suffering from both warring factions while the question of its future was being discussed.

"That portion which has been given back to Cetywayo was without a ruler. Usibebu was walking rampant over it, seizing the cattle and food of the people. Large areas were depopulated, the places where the people had dwelt being marked by the ashes of their dwellings. The planting season had come but there was not planting."<sup>39</sup>

Zibhebhu avenged himself on the Usutu supporters within striking distance. Sombele was driven into the bush and his cattle taken. Six white adventurers were prominent in this attack.<sup>40</sup> Zibhebhu

37. C-3864, No.110, Derby to Bulwer, 24/11/83, p.236.

38. C-3864, No.111, Bulwer to Derby, 27/11/83, pp.236-237.

39. Gibson, op.cit., p.263.

40. Bulwer's comment on this raid was "The expedition was really little else than a cattle-lifting expedition..." See C-3864, No.92, Bulwer to Derby, 1/10/83, p.191. Zibhebhu's statement can be found in C-3864, No.49, Bulwer to Derby, 13/8/83, Enclosure 16, Osborn to Bulwer, 9/5/83, p.99.

answered the official protests frankly and his statements reveal the weakness of the harassed officials trying to keep the Zulus from exterminating each other with virtually no force at their command. Zibhebhu informed Osborn that he

"...always listened to your words not to attack others, and not to retaliate when his territory was invaded, and he refrained from doing so, but now thinks he must punish those who are his enemies and still seek to destroy him; if he does wrong thereby, he will submit to punishment from the Government without a word, as a son submits to his father."<sup>41</sup>

Zibhebhu even brought his impi to the borders of the Reserve and sent intimidating messages to the king.<sup>42</sup> Through Colenbrander he demanded the cattle of the Usutu who had fled Cetshwayo's territory and stated that he intended "to assert his right in this territory, until such time as the Government think or choose to make other arrangements with him."<sup>43</sup>

The Usutu out of the Reserve were in a dreadful position. The unrest of the past few years had meant that they had not planted crops and, starving and hunted, they banded together in crags making raids for food and in revenge. One can see signs of a complete breakdown in the social system; the Usutu were demoralised and the wanton cruelty and killing for its own sake are manifestations of this.

41. C-3864, No.49, Bulwer to Derby, Enclosure No.16, Osborn to Bulwer, 9/8/83, p.99.
42. C-3864, No.92, Derby to Bulwer, 1/10/83, Enclosure 10, Osborn to Bulwer, 26/9/83, p.201.
43. I feel that Bulwer was quite right in thinking that Zibhebhu's "white advisers" were the cause of the sentiments expressed in this letter which are not at all characteristic of the chief. Bulwer wrote that the demands were "of a kind that cannot be listened to for a moment. It ought not have been made, and that Usibebu should have made it would be a matter of surprise to me if it were not for the circumstances of the letter which conveys it. You cannot so earnestly warn Usibebu...against listening to the advice of irresponsible white persons whom he gets about him." For the offending letter and the officials reaction see C-3864, No.116, Bulwer to Derby, 27/10/83 and Enclosures, p.242.

"Almost every day during October and November I had some fresh information about the doings of the Sutu people, and never a week passed without some kraals were attacked by night, people murdered, and cattle and things taken... They [the Usutu] said at my place that this was only the beginning. They would continue in this way until there was nobody left in the country, but those that there with them in the rocks, and when they had got so far and the people got used to their doings, they would make a bold stroke for Sibebu and treat him in the same way they had done Umfanawendhlela."<sup>44</sup>

Umfanawendhlela, the ex-appointed chief, was one of the unfortunate Zulus who, while not opposing the king, had not committed himself to him. He had appealed to the British in the most moving of terms for aid<sup>45</sup> but this was not forthcoming and he began to move to Zibhebhu's territory but, just before he crossed the border, he was murdered by the Usutu.<sup>46</sup> As Cetshwayo said "the people are becoming like wild animals through the absence of rule in the country to which Her Majesty's Government restored him...".<sup>47</sup>

Then came an unexpected event. While the officials searched for a solution and Zululand slipped deeper and deeper into anarchy Cetshwayo died in his hut at Eshove, according to the official report, of 'fatty disease of the heart'.<sup>48</sup>

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44. C-3864, No.165, Bulwer to Derby, 31/12/83, Enclosure 1, Osborn to Bulwer, 22/12/83, Letter from Dr. Oftebro to Osborn, 22/12/83, p.309.
45. Anyone wanting to read a report which reveals the terrible situation in which many Zulu chiefs must have found themselves should study Mfananendhlela's statement, C-3864, No.80, Bulwer to Derby, 17/9/83, Enclosure, Osborn to Bulwer, 5/9/83, Statement, 3/9/83, p.163.
46. C-3864, No.161, Bulwer to Derby, 24/12/83, p.303.
47. One report says that Cetshwayo gave Mnyamana orders to kill Umfanawendhlela but the old Usutu refused on the grounds that the ex-appointed chief was his friend. Mnyamana seems to have been a man of remarkable character and integrity. He refused to visit the king at Eshove because it was only his presence in the northern area "that prevented the people from scattering and giving their allegiance to others." C-3864, No.165, Bulwer to Derby, 31/12/83, Enclosure 2, 24/12/83, p.311.
48. A disputed point. C.T. Binns, The Last Zulu King, (Longmans), Appendix E, p.225 for the various opinions. Have the authorities who believe he was poisoned studied the doctor's report made while the king was in the Cape in which the king was said to have a weak heart? See C-3247, No.33, Robinson to Kimberley, 11/3/82, p.22, (Telegraphic).

At the time of the king's death things in Zululand had reached something of a stalemate. Zibhebhu was the most powerful man in Zululand but the Usutu were still strong enough to hold him. The Natal officials tried their best to persuade the Colonial Office to give them the means to swing the balance to the side of law and order. Soon after the king's death Bulwer wrote that

"...after careful consideration of the altered circumstances of Zululand I fear that no arrangement short of our establishment in that country of either our rule or of our authority will heal the existing divisions or even restore peace; and that Mr. Osborn advises against any establishment of Dinizulu, being of the opinion that the only mode of surmounting the difficulty is to extend our authority up to the black Umfolosi leaving the Chiefs Uhamu and Usibebu in independent positions beyond it."<sup>49</sup>

Derby must have seriously considered such a proposal<sup>50</sup> and Bulwer applied pressure.

"The whole question is as embarrassing as it well can be. If we leave the country to itself it will be a prey to anarchy and disorder. If we say we are prepared to recognise Cetywayo's son Dinizulu as Cetywayo's successor, he and the Usutu party will, nevertheless, be unable to hold their own, and the struggle that has now been going on for so long will continue, to the misery and destruction of the people. If we say that we are prepared to recognise Usibebu as the ruler of the country the powerful Usutu party will assuredly not acquiesce in his rule, and the conflict will be carried on until the stronger hand has subdued the weaker. If we take the country under our authority we shall undoubtedly offer thereby the best guarantee for peace and order..."<sup>51</sup>

But "peace and order" were not to come to Zululand. As the Colonial Office procrastinated yet another party entered the struggle; one sufficiently strong to swing the balance of power onto the side of the Usutu and against any hope for the re-establishment

49. C-4037, No.15, Bulwer to Derby, 14/2/84, p.18.

50. See C-4037, No.17, Derby to Bulwer, 6/2/84, p.16, No.22, Derby to Bulwer, 26/2/84, p.22, (Telegraphic), No.27, Derby to Bulwer, 1/3/84, p.30.

51. C-4037, No.70, Bulwer to Derby, 24/3/84, p.79.



of law and order.<sup>52</sup>

A group of Transvaal Boers had been watching the situation in Zululand for some time. Eventually they sought out Nnyamana and suggested that they help the Usutu back to power, but the old man refused to be party to such a movement. The Boers then went into the Inkandhla and found Dinizulu.

"There was much misgiving in the minds of the Zulus. They suspected some design to their land, and intimated their fear in that regard. But the most emphatic assurances were given to the contrary."<sup>53</sup>

Nevertheless the Boers were successful and they entered into a compact with Dinizulu and proclaimed him king.<sup>54</sup>

In the Reserve Dabulamanzi encouraged, Gibson believed, by the prospect of the Usutu star in ascendancy, flouted Osborn's commands and this led to a serious skirmish on the 10th May between the Usutu and the Resident's forces.<sup>55</sup> But "the attention of the Usutu party was engaged in the main enterprise in which the help of the Boers had been secured"<sup>56</sup> - the destruction of the Mandhlakazi and Zibhebhu, who had brought about the downfall of the Zulu royal house.

Signs of an Usutu attack on the Mandhlakazi appeared before the compact had been finalised with the Boers.<sup>57</sup> Early in April Osborn sent a message to Nnyamana telling him not to attack Zibhebhu and <sup>to</sup> disperse the Usutu who had gathered around him.<sup>58</sup> But it was in May that the news broke which really worried the Natal officials.

52. Space does not allow the use of the letters which appear in the Blue Books regarding the "negotiations" which led to the alliance between the Usutu and the Boers and I have used Gibson's account. See Gibson, op.cit., pp.268-270.

53. Gibson, op.cit., p.269.

54. C-4191, No.7(a), Bulwer to Derby, 28/5/84, p.8. For a detailed account of the ceremony see The Natal Witness, 27/5/84.

55. Gibson, op.cit., p.269.

56. Ibid., p.270.

57. C-4037, No.76, Bulwer to Derby, 31/3/84, p.81.

58. C-4037, No.55, Bulwer to Derby, 3/4/84, p.58.

"It is reported that eight hundred armed Boers are in conference at the Hlobane, Zululand. With them is Dinizulu, whom they propose to make King in return for territorial cession... The object of the Boers for a long time has been to obtain the uppermost part of Zululand, they will thus eventually make themselves masters of the country, to the great loss of the Zulu people, who will pay heavily for this Usutu compact."<sup>59</sup>

On the 9th May Bulwer reported that armed Boers had entered Zululand.<sup>60</sup>

Faced with the prospect of a combined Boer-Usutu attack Zibhebhu appealed to the Government which, he felt, he had loyally supported. His pleas for aid were both pathetic and tragic.

"Usibebu says he is not afraid of encountering his black enemies but what chance of success has he got when they are joined by white men as the Boers have done. He and his people are not armed as white men are. He fears that with this help given by the Boers he will be beaten by the Usutus who will spare none. He has always been obedient to the Governor, and now he finds himself obliged to ask the Governor to help him against his enemies. He never did anything to the Usutu to provoke their enmity, his only fault in their eyes being that he accepted the chieftenship given him by the English who conquered the whole country, and has hitherto maintained his position. He prays that the English will help him.

Usibebu request you to send these words to the Governor and to tell the Governor that he belongs to the English, and therefore begs help from them.

Reply:- I will send Usibebu's message to the Governor as requested. I must tell him, however, that I cannot hold out to him any hope of getting the assistance he asks for; and I advise him to do all in his power in self-defence with the means at his disposal."<sup>61</sup>

It is obvious that Bulwer hoped the Government would go to Zibhebhu's aid. He urged the Colonial Office to check the Boers "by proclaiming Zululand part of Her Majesty's dominions".<sup>62</sup>

"For the great interests at stake, I submit that we should not leave the question to solve itself, and that if action is to be taken, the longer delayed the more difficult it will be."<sup>63</sup>

It had seemed, in the long period since Cetshwayo's flight from the Mandhlakazi, that the Colonial Office was considering

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59. C-4037, No.79, Bulwer to Derby, 2/5/84, p.83, (Telegraphic).  
 60. C-4037, No.93, Derby to Robinson, 9/5/84, p.90, (Telegraphic).  
 61. C-4191, No.16, Bulwer to Derby, 8/5/84, Enclosure 1, 29/4/84, p.25.  
 62. C-4037, No.95, Bulwer to Derby, 8/5/84, p.90.  
 63. Ibid.

extending its "rule" to the Black Umfolosi but the news of Boer intervention drove from their minds any such extension of authority. Perhaps realising the hazards involved in being forced to support a Zulu faction (the justice of whose cause was in doubt) against the Boers, who had proved their military capabilities so recently at Majuba against British forces, the Colonial Office, tortoise-like, drew its head smartly into its shell.

"After a full consideration of recent reports and recommendations, Her Majesty's Government adhere to the decision not to extend British sovereignty or protection over Zululand..."<sup>64</sup>

Zibhebhu was to be left to fight it out on his own.

There is no doubt that this decision affected Bulwer deeply.

In a report covering a letter from Zibhebhu to the Resident which said

"The Chief begs me to say that he does not know if this messenger will reach you... He always depended on you, his father, for help, and thought that when he died, you would be near at hand."<sup>65</sup>

Bulwer wrote:-

"It is impossible to read this letter without a feeling of the most painful regret for the position in which that Chief is placed by the action of the Boers."<sup>66</sup>

Zibhebhu had great cause for bitterness. Not only was he deserted by the Government but also by Colenbrander and John Dunn.

"He thought when he fought against his own nation that you would always help him in case of need, now he has found out that he need not depend on you. He asks you for the last time to come and help him out of his difficulties."<sup>67</sup>

John Dunn did not move.

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64. C-4037, No.110, Derby to Bulwer, 16/5/84, p.117, (Telegraphic).  
 65. C-4191, No.27, Bulwer to Derby, 19/5/84, Enclosure, 5/5/84, p.40.  
 66. C-4191, No.27, Bulwer to Derby, 19/5/84, p.40.  
 67. C-4191, No.46, Bulwer to Derby, 27/5/84, Enclosure 1, Usibebu (per Mr. Eckersley) to Chief John Dunn, 19/5/84, p.69.

At sunset on the 12th June Zibhebhu and two of his "white advisers" rode into Osborn's residence at Eshowe. Their story was a mournful one. The Mandhlakazi made their stand on the 5th June at Etshaneni, at the point where the Mkuzi River passes through the Lebombo mountains. An ambush had been laid and Zibhebhu had intended to destroy the Boer horses but a shot was fired prematurely and the Mandhlakazi's position betrayed.<sup>68</sup> Although the Usutu charge was repulsed the Boers, sniping from a distance, saved the battle for the Usutu, and the Mandhlakazi soldiers were massacred, their women and children scattered, and their cattle plundered. Once in the Reserve Zibhebhu did his best to get aid but this was refused. Bulwer's comments to Derby after Zibhebhu's defeat are significant.

"It is impossible to regard without feelings of the greatest pain and concern the ruin that has thus been brought upon the Chief Usibebu.

He was placed and left in the position of an independent Chief by us. He has always looked upon himself as belonging to the Government, and has always shown himself a loyal friend of the Government... That Usibebu punished and spoiled those who had attacked him is unquestionable; but he never sought to take advantage of his successes or to extend his rule. His desire was to be left alone and in peace in the territory over which he had been placed, and when he was forced into action it was, with few exceptions, to resist the intrigues and attacks directed against him. Had we taken over central Zululand for the benefit of the Zulu people we should have found no more loyal neighbour or supporter than Usibebu. But we hesitated to do this: we left the country to take its chances. We left it in confusion and disorder, and the Usutus have made a bargain with the Boers which has brought about, on the plea of the restoration of order, this most undeserved fate on the head of a Chief who has proved himself to possess as chivalrous and gallant a nature as the history of the Zulu nation can show."<sup>69</sup>

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68. This account of the battle is taken from Gibson, *op.cit.*, pp.270-272. Others believe that the shot was fired by a traitor whom Zibhebhu later captured and forced to chop off his own leg. The man is said to have nearly completed the self-inflicted amputation before Zibhebhu killed him. See H.P. Braatvedt, Roaming Zululand with a Native Commissioner, (Shuter & Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 1949), pp.80-81. For an eyewitness account of the battle see D. Reitz, No Outspan, (Faber and Faber, London), pp.35-36.

69. C-4191, No.66, Bulwer to Derby, 16/6/84, p.68.

The defeat of Zibhebhu ended the first phase of the strife between the Mandhlakazi and Usutu. Events were to prove that despite the apparent victory of the Usutu, neither side had won, for the Boers were greedy allies.

Cetywayo once said, quite rightly, that "the bloodshed in my reign was, to the bloodshed since, as an ant in a pond of water."<sup>70</sup> Because of the great suffering and injustice that occurred in Zululand, and the accusations thrown at each other by the officials and the King's white sympathisers, it is tempting to try to discover which of the various parties can be held responsible for the "ruin of Zululand." The conclusions one can reach are, however, limited and generally unsatisfactory. As we have seen, certain officials can be blamed for acting on information which did not accurately reflect the actual situation in Zululand, and for overlooking significant factors in their various solutions to Zululand's problems; but they cannot, without distorting the evidence which appears in the Blue Books, be accused of being involved in some sinister plot against the Zulu people as has been suggested. The interference of white humanitarians might have made a bad situation worse, but their motives cannot be questioned, nor can the many very real cases of injustice in Zululand, which cried out for redress, be denied.

Any analysis of the events which occurred in Zululand between 1880-1884 must move away from the backbiting of rival parties and factions, and attempts to apportion blame on groups or personalities, into the realm of power-politics. The Mandhlakazi and Usutu war evolved out of the abandonment of Zululand by the British Government, after it had destroyed the axis around which the Zulu social system revolved.

Good government in Zululand depended on the assumption of

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70. C-3427, No.84, Robinson to Kimberley, 16/5/82, Enclosure, Notes of an interview with Cetywayo, 14/5/82, p.81.

responsibility, with the risk of considerable expenditure, but political and economic necessity forbade this. Without a strong government in Zululand it is difficult to think of any form of settlement which would have prevented the collapse of Zululand into anarchy.

Despite the fact that British officials were only supposed to have diplomatic powers, we have seen them slowly being forced to fill the vacuum left in the country by the British abandonment of Zululand after the war. Beginning at Inshlasatshe these officials moved further and further from being "the eyes and ears of the government" until they were using all their influence to keep the warring factions apart. They could wield this influence because the Zulus still saw them as representatives of the power that had conquered them, and were therefore their rulers by right of conquest. Slowly however the Zulus lost this confidence when they found that although the officials could threaten, arbitrate and cajole, it was still the assegai and the rifle that had the final word. To the end Zibhebhu expected that he would be supported by the government which he considered he had obeyed whenever possible. Indeed, even Dulver seems to have thought that the Mandhlakazi should have been aided when attacked by the Usutu and the Boers. Perhaps if justice, in the moral sense, had had any meaning in Zululand at the time, he was owed that support. According to the letter of the law, however, the British Government was not bound in any way to support him. The Home Government's attitude manifests itself in this extract from Derby's reply to Dulver's plea that the British Government consider helping Zibhebhu.

"In the communications which Usibebu has addressed to the Government, he assumes the attitude of an ally from whom aid, to which he is justly entitled, has been withheld; and there appears to be an impression in other quarters that there is ground for this view, and that assistance has been withheld from Usibebu merely from a desire to avoid the loss of life and expense which might result from the employment of a British force in his support.

This is, however, not the view of Her Majesty's Government. They do not consider that they have denied to Usibebu any assistance to which he was entitled. If they had been under an obligation to aid him, such aid would not have been withheld on the ground of its inconvenience or risk. Usibebu was chosen with twelve others, in 1879, by Lord Wolsley as an "appointed Chief" in Zululand. Under the terms of the settlement then arrived at Her Majesty's Government assumed no obligation to guarantee the peace or defend one Chief against another."<sup>71</sup>

Dorby's argument is no doubt perfectly correct but, from 1879 when Sir Theophilus Shepstone asked of the Colonial Office, "Suppose Zibebu receives from us the reward of an independent sovereignty... are we bound to support him in the possession of that reward?"<sup>72</sup> they had turned a blind eye to this problem and allowed the Zulus, and the white officials to believe, and to act on, a false assumption. Valid though Dorby's argument is, it smacks of a hurried attempt on the part of the Colonial Office to justify themselves. Dorby goes on to say that after Cetshwayo had been restored "no guarantee of independence...was given Zibhebhu."

"The condition of Zululand since 1879 has been one of chronic war, carried on by barbarous reprisals, and opinion is hopelessly divided as to the degree of blame to be assigned to each chief or party. Usibebu at least has often acted on his own responsibility; his recent defeat was the consequence of his victory of 1883, and his ambitious projects of the present year, and Her Majesty's Government has never entered into any engagement to aid or defend him. All, therefore,<sup>73</sup> that he is entitled to is an asylum in the Reserve..."

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71. C-4191, No.82, Dorby to Bulwer, 19/8/84, p.138.

72. Vide supra, p.11.

73. C-4191, No.82, Dorby to Bulwer, 19/8/84, p.138.

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- A. British Parliamentary Papers

Most of the essay is based on information found in the Blue Books listed below. Nos. C-2482 - C-2950 have not very much information on the subject. Many writers claim that the Blue Books present a distorted picture of the period. Certainly the officials writing from Natal were inclined to be harsh towards the Usutu; nevertheless, the Blue Books are a more accurate guide to the history of the period than the works of those writers who set out to prove that the officials, whose despatches are printed in the Blue Books, deliberately distorted the truth of the events in Zululand.

1. C-2482 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of South Africa. (Presented)
2. C-2505 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of South Africa. (Presented)
3. C-2584 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of South Africa. (Presented)
4. C-2695 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of South Africa. (Presented January, 1881.)
5. C-2783 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of South Africa. (Presented)
6. C-2866 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of South Africa. (Presented April, 1881.)
7. C-2950 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of South Africa. (Presented June, 1881.)
8. C-3182 Correspondence Relating to the Affairs of Natal and Zululand. (Presented March, 1882.)
9. C-3247 Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand. (Presented June, 1882.)
10. C-3270 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand. (Presented July, 1882.)
11. C-3293 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Cetywayo. (Presented July, 1882.)



12. C-3466 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Cetywayo.  
(Presented February, 1882.)
13. C-3616 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Cetywayo.  
(Presented May, 1883.)
14. C-3705 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Cetywayo.  
(Presented July, 1883.)
15. C-3864 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Cetywayo.  
(Presented February, 1884.)
16. C-4037 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Adjacent Territories.  
(Presented May, 1884.)
17. C-4191 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Adjacent Territories.  
(Presented August, 1884.)
18. C-4214 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Adjacent Territories.  
(Presented October, 1884.)

2. Official Manuscript Sources. (Unprinted.)

A. Government House Papers : Zululand Correspondence.

I have consulted these papers only when I have found the information in the Blue Books sparse, or in an attempt to clear up an obscure point. For this essay I consulted Vol.677, which deals with the years 1879-1881.

B. Zululand Archives.

I consulted these papers for the same reasons that I gave above. They concern for the most part the day-to-day contact between officials, (with the occasional report by an expert, like one of the Shepstones or a traveller in Zululand). I consulted Vol.1.

3. Private Manuscript Sources. (Unprinted.)

C. Sir T. Shepstone Papers.

I consulted Vol.XXII to study Sir Theophilus Shepstone's Memorandum on Scheme for settling Zululand.

4. Newspapers.

Taking advantage of the work of the Bishop of Natal who "reprinted, analysed, and annotated every leading article, ... every correspondent's letter, that appeared in Natal on the Zulu Question", I have not examined every Natal newspaper which appeared between 1880 and 1884 but only followed up those references which seem to be significant. Space and time did not allow a more intensive study of the newspapers. Just as

the Zulu question divided Natal white opinion so it divided the newspapers, and to decide the validity of reports would mean a study of correspondents and the editors themselves. It would seem that the "Special Correspondents" were often fearfully partisan; Kuna, Kama's white man was a correspondent, as was Barke, one of Zibhebhu's white adventurers. Hope of objective reports from men like these is remote.

- A. Natal Merchantile Advertiser.
- B. The Natal Witness.
- C. Times of Natal.
- D. The Natal Mercury.

#### SECONDARY SOURCES

##### A. Contemporary and Near-Contemporary Works.

1. CAMPBELL, W.Y.: With Cetshwayo in the Inkandha, and the present state of the Zulu question. P. Davis and Sons, Durban, 1883.

Written by the "Special Correspondent" of the Natal Merchantile Advertiser this account of a trip through the Reserve Territory during the time that Cetshwayo was hiding there, and of interviews with the king and leaders of the Usutu, is fascinating. The author lays great stress on his being an objective observer. If he is, then our sympathy must go to the Usutu and the king. I would like to discover if there was any link between Campbell and the Colensoes before making a definite judgement on this pamphlet - there could have been, for he travelled to Zululand with William Grant, an avid Colensoite.

2. Cetshwayo's story of the Zulu nation and the war. In Macmillan's Magazine, February, 1880.

Interesting but has little information directly concerning the topic.

3. COLENSO, P.E.: The Ruin of Zululand, An Account of British Doings in Zululand Since the Invasion of 1879, William Ridgway, London, 1884 and 1885, 2 Volumes.

The most important secondary source on this topic. Most of the basic research was done by Miss Colenso's father and she produced the book after his death in June 1883. The book takes the form of a prolonged attack on the British officials in Natal and Zululand; a passionate supporter of the king and the Usutu she harries and worries the officials relentlessly. Her analyses of the Blue Books are useful and interesting but not always (one might say seldom) correct. Too often she interprets delay as deliberate obstruction, mistakes as deceit, or sees in innocent actions, sinister plots. She accepts the words of the Usutu without question. At the same time, however, without these volumes our knowledge of the period would be badly one-sided. The Usutu had very real grievances which many officials did not grasp and the Colensoes' transcripts of their complaints and grievances make it possible to get a much more accurate (although more complex) picture of the period.

4. COLenso, F.E.: Zululand after the War. In The Contemporary Review, 1882.

A precis of the Colenso view on the topic.

5. COLenso, J.W.: The Course of Political Events in Zululand from October 1881 to June, 1883. (Printed by Haggam at the Bishop's Press.)

Also called the Bishop's Digest this volume contains most of the material which F.E. Colenso used for The Ruin of Zululand and so the same remarks apply to both volumes.

6. COLenso, J.W.: Bishop Colenso's Commentary on Frere's Policy, (further details not known, but presumably the same as the above volume by the bishop).

Little on the topic but does mention the early months of Wolseley's settlement and gives a few details about Kibhebhu.

7. COLenso, H.E.: Zululand: Past and Present. Addressed to the Members in the Memorial Hall, Wednesday, October 1st, 1890, (Reprinted from "The Journal of the Manchester Geographical Society.)

The Colenso interpretation of the period.

8. DIXIE, Florence: A Defence of Zululand and its King. Echoes from the Blue-books. Chatto and Windus, London.

The high-spirited and somewhat eccentric Special Correspondent for the London newspaper Morning Post fell under the spell of Bishopstove, and her writings are an example of the agitation for the restoration of the king. Interesting but partisan.

9. DIXIE, Florence: In the land of misfortune.

An account of Lady Florence's trip through south Africa. Interesting, especially her account of the Inshlazatshe meeting.

10. GIBSON, J.Y.: The Story of the Zulus, P. Davis and Sons, 1911.

Unbiased, this book is the most valuable one on the topic, suffering only, perhaps, from the author's fear of committing himself. It is obvious that he studied the Blue Books with great care and constructed the chapters that deal with the topic, on the despatches which appear therein. To this he has added a wide knowledge of the Zulu people and their customs.

11. HAGGARD, H. Rider: Cetywayo and his White Neighbours, Trubner and Co., London, 1882.

Contains a brilliantly written and far-seeing attack on Wolseley's settlement.

7. KRIGE, E.J. The Social System of the Zulus,  
Shuter & Shooter, Pietermaritzburg,  
1936.

This anthropological study, a compilation of secondary sources, is indispensable if one wants to savour the varied but complex customs, traditions and attitudes of the Zulu people, and realise the devastating effect the civil war must have had on the social life of the Zulus. It also make one aware of the danger of judging, or ascribing motives to members of an alien society, like many writers on Zululand affairs have done.

8. LUGG, H.C. Historic Natal and Zululand,  
Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg,  
1949.

Using other secondary sources and the knowledge gained from Zulus themselves this book is a series of descriptions of people and places of interest. Insofar as it discusses the topic it is fair although reflects what might be called "colonial" opinion.

9. MORRIS, D.R.: The Washing of the Spears,  
Jonathan Cape, London, 1966.

It seems harsh to criticise an interesting and vivid account of the history of the Zulu nation for a few inaccuracies in the short section which covers the years 1830-1884. In this section the influence of J.Y. Gibson can be clearly seen.

10. REITZ, D.: No Outsman. Fabor and Fabor,  
London.

Used only for the eyewitness account of the battle at Etshaneni.

11. ROBERTS, B.: Ladies in the Veld, John Murray,  
London, 1965.

Lively and interesting account of two females who made their mark in Natal in the last century, one of them being Lady Florence Dixie who was to become the king's foremost champion.

12. ROBINSON, R. and Africa and the Victorians, Macmillan,  
GALLAGHER, J. London, 1961.

Used to obtain further information on Colonial policy of the time. Little relevant information.

#### Unpublished Theses and Research Essays.

1. KEMP, D.H.: Johan William Colenbrander. A  
history of his times and people and  
events with which he was associated.  
1879-1896, Vol. I, (Ph.D., University  
of Natal, 1962.
2. REES, P.D.G.: The Restoration of Cattleways to  
Zululand, (B.A. Hons., University of  
Natal, 1965.)

12. MITFORD, B.: Through the Zulu Country, Its Battlefields and its People.  
Kegan Paul, French, and Co.  
1983.

In the short section which deals with matters relevant to the period, the author is of the opinion that all Zululand desired the return of their king. But for this, there is little relevant to the topic.

13. MOODIE, D.C.F.  
(Editor): John Dunn, Cetshwayo, and the Three Generals, Natal Printing and Publishing, Pietermaritzburg, 1886.

Has little relevant information.

14. SAMUELSON, R.C.A. Long, Long Ago, Knox, 1929.

The author was closely associated with the Zulus and with their king. Contains many interesting anecdotes, not only about Cetshwayo, but also about Zibhebhu. Interesting, but I was not able to make much use of the volume.

#### B. Recent Works.

1. BINNS, C.F.: The Last Zulu King, (Longmans, London, 1963.)

Very useful, with a large amount of relevant information but with a strong "Bishopstowe" bias.

2. BRAATVEDT, H.P.: Rossing Zululand with a Native Commissioner, Shuter & Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 1949.

A few scattered reminiscences and anecdotes - not of any particular value as a source.

3. DEYANT, A.T.: Olden Times in Zululand and Natal, Longmans, Green and Co., 1929.

Used only to obtain information on the origins of the Mandlakazi.

4. BROOKES, E.H. and WEBB, C. de B.: A History of Natal, University of Natal, 1965.

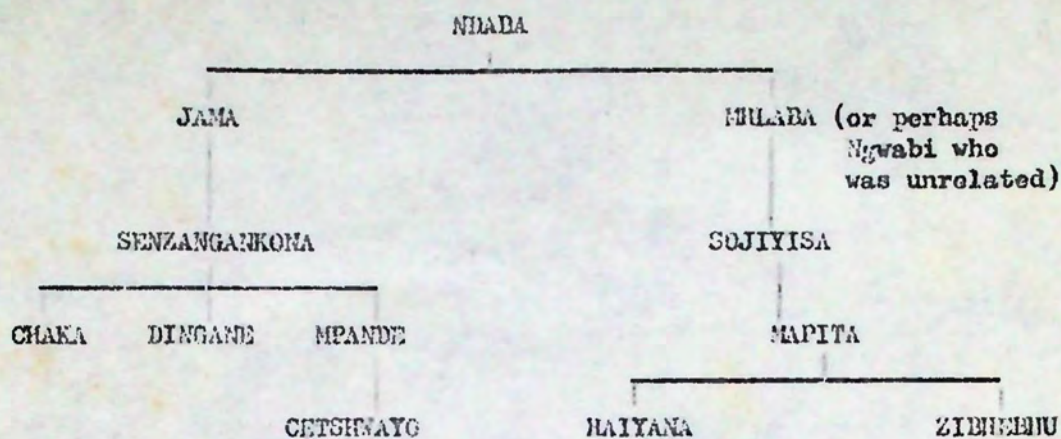
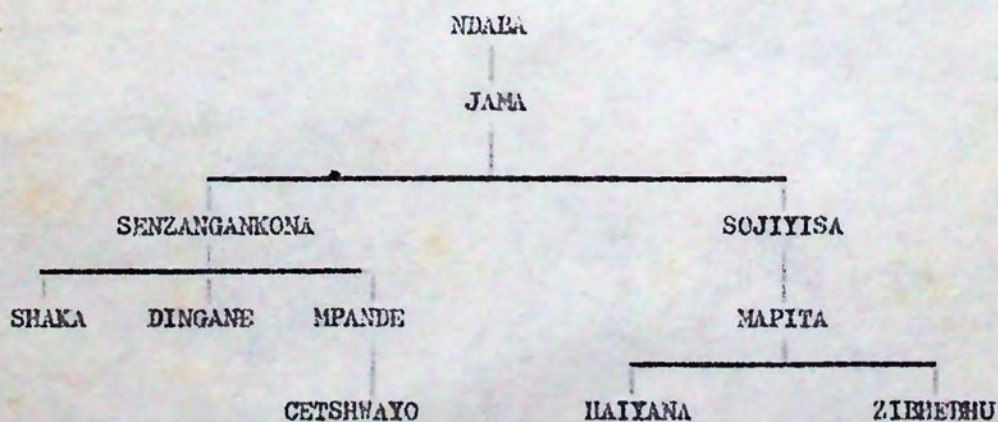
Accurate on the topic and very useful, particularly the bibliography.

5. DULPIN, V.: The White Whirlwind.

Although this popular biography is based on the Colenbrander Papers it is difficult to distinguish between fact and fantasy and I have made very little use of it.

6. DE KIEWIET, C.W.: The Imperial factor in South Africa : A study in politics and economics.

I have depended almost solely on this interesting and indispensable book for information on British Colonial policy during the period under consideration.

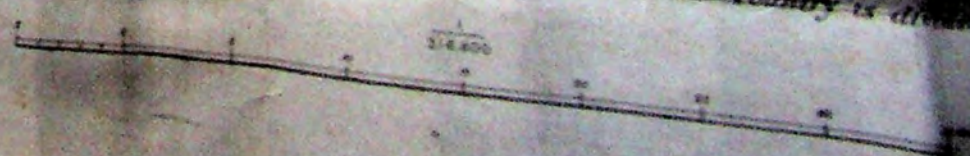
APPENDIX 1RIVAL GENEALOGIESBRYANT *Carleton*GIBSON : COLINSON : LUGG



Country is proposed to  
give back to the Danga

# ZULULAND

Showing the Thirteen Chieftainships into which the Country is divided



(54)  
J. Alleyne  
1<sup>st</sup> Decemr 1877

Boundary proposed by Sir H. Bulwer 1862  
Boundary fixed upon by H.M. Genl 1867

H L U B I

FAKUKAZI NINCO

Y O W A W E N L E L A

Territory

St Lucia Lake  
Iwaba

St Lucia Bay

Queen's Forest  
good timber

