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SUBMISSION AT CODESA RE: PARTICIPATION OF THE KING OF THE ZULU

PEOPLE

BY

PROF S J MAPHALALA

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

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THE PARTICIPATION OF THE ZULU KING AT CODESA

Before deciding whether the Zulu King should participate at Codesa or not, one should understand the formation of the Zulu Kingdom, the role of the Zulu kings in that kingdom and in the struggle for liberation.

THE PERIOD 1816-1828

There were hundreds of independent clans and their amakhosi (traditional leaders), living in what is today known as the province of Natal. When Inkosi Shaka of the Zulu clan succeeded his father in about 1816, he united all these clans into what was called the Zulu kingdom which was confederal in nature. In this manner Inkosi Shaka became known as the king; to distinguish him from the ordinary amakhosi. The Zulu people referred to him as the Isilo (leopard) and Ingonyama (lion). The border of the Zulu kingdom before the death of King Shaka in 1828 stretched from the Ingwavuma district in the north, to south of the Mzimkhulu river in the south and from the Indian Ocean in the east to the Drakensberg mountains in the west.

1.1 THE ZULU KING AND THE LAND

The Zulu amakhosi in the Zulu kingdom held land on behalf of the king who, in turn, owned it on behalf of the whole Zulu nation. *He is a custodian of the land of the Zulu people.* The land was therefore indivisible. It was and is still

unthinkable to resolve issues regarding land without the involvement of the Zulu King, e.g.

- (a) when the British settlers arrived at Sibubulungu (Durban) in 1824 in search of land, the Inkosi who was the king's representative in the area referred them to King Shaka at the Royal Kwa-Bulawayo Umuzi (Palace). It was here that they were given sites for their usage like any other persons in the kingdom.

2 KING DINGANE'S RULE

He ascended the Zulu throne when King Shaka had consolidated most parts of the Zulu kingdom. Unlike King Shaka who participated in most of the campaigns uniting the clans, King Dingane lived at the Mgungundlovu umuzi (Palace) for the most part of his rule. Ndlela kaSompisi Ntuli was King Dingane's Prime Minister while Dambuza Ntombela was his deputy.

2.1 The Land Issue under King Dingane

The concept of land ownership was still the same under King Dingane. That is why the Voortrekkers also came to present their case to him about this issue. The King and his isigunqu (cabinet)

agreed to give the Voortrekkers sites under certain conditions, namely that they returned stolen cattle. However, before the actual presentation of the stolen cattle, the Voortrekkers were seen loitering at the King's palace at night. The penalty for doing this at the King's palace and even in an ordinary Zulu umuzi was death because only the abathakathi (sorcerers) walked about at the people's imizi at night. Therefore, Piet Retief and his relatives including those at Kwa-Nobamba (Weenen) were put to death in 1838. This led to the battle of Ncome on 16 December 1838 which resulted in the defeat of the Zulu army and subsequent loss of the territory of KwaZulu south of the Thukela river. What we should keep in mind is the fact that the killing of Piet Retief and his followers had nothing to do with land since land was indivisible. They were to be given sites in the normal way had they not been seen loitering in the palace at night.

3.0 KING MPANDE'S RULE (1840-1872)

Having lost the KwaZulu territory south of the Thukela river, King Mpande ruled over part of KwaZulu north of the Thukela river. We should keep in mind however, that the Zulu people south of the Thukela river still regarded King Mpande as their king. For this reason when the British ruled the territory south of the Thukela in 1843, they did not interfere with the system of amakhosi obtaining

north of the Thukela. But the king's place was taken by the British governor who became known as the "Supreme Chief over natives." The British magistrates worked hand in hand with the Zulu amakhosi who still knew who their "real" king was.

King Mpande, his Prime Minister Masiphula Ntshangase and isigungu gave sites to the Afrikaners living on the territory west of the Mzinyathi (Buffalo) river. As was the case in all subjects of the Zulu Kingdom, that land was not meant to be regarded as private property, but was for the usage only. The missionaries who also arrived from overseas to introduce Christianity, were given land by King Mpande along similar lines. Thus, in all matters pertaining to land King Mpande was involved.

THE ERA OF KING CETSHWAYO: 1872-1884

King Cetshwayo strictly adhered to Zulu traditions propounded by his predecessors in governing KwaZulu. He and his prime minister, Mnyamana Buthelezi and isigungu made it known to their neighbours (The South African Republic, Orange Free State Republic and the British Colony of Natal) that they desired to live in peace and good neighbourliness.

- a) When the Afrikaners wanted to annex part of the Zulu kingdom

territory west of the Mzinyathi river in 1876, King Cetshwayo and his isigungu resisted. The Boundary Commission which was instituted by the British in 1878 to investigate the matter upheld the KwaZulu Claim. Once again the Zulu King stood with his people in this land issue.

- b) The British government regarded as the greatest imperialist in the nineteenth century invaded the KwaZulu territory in January 1879 in order to usurp KwaZulu territory. The King and his prime minister convened the meeting of the isigungu and the imbizo (National meeting). The Zulu people agreed to defend their kingdom against the imperialists who had the advantage of reinforcements from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and other British colonies. After bloody battles in which the British troops killed even the wounded Zulu amabutho (royal regiments) and burnt the Zulu imizi, the Zulu forces were defeated. The King who had stood with his people throughout the war was captured on 31 August 1879 and banished ~~to~~ Cape Town.

The British government tried to switch the clock back to pre-Shakan period in the absence of King Cetshwayo. The result was a civil war which made KwaZulu Kingdom ungovernable. When the King was restored to the KwaZulu kingdom in 1883, the

civil war which was fanned by the British authorities was being waged and resulted in the burning of the Ondini Royal Palace for the second time.

Once again we see a monarch who never failed his people in so far as the land issue and matters affecting the Zulu nation were concerned.

KING DIN^uZULU AND THE ZULU NATION 1884-1913

King Din^uzulu ascended the Zulu throne when he was 16 years old and the civil war which had cost the life of his father in February 1884 was at its climax. The British government wanted to obliterate the Zulu nation through the arming of Zibhebhu. This led to the annexation of the Zulu kingdom in 1887 and the so-called USuthu uprising in 1888. King Din^uzulu was sentenced to 10 years and banished to St. Helena.

On 6 January 1898 when King Din^uzulu returned from banishment, KwaZulu had already been incorporated into Natal. The British called him "Local induna" and "ordinary chief". But at a meeting of 300 amakhosi and their izinduna, J L H^ulett, Secretary for Native Affairs was told in no uncertain terms that the Zulu people would always regard Din^uzulu as King over all the Zulu people. The

British government's reply was the prohibition of the formation of amabutho (Royal regiments). Thus, despite the fact that King Din^uzulu was restored to the barren uSuthu district, the Zulu people from Natal, Swazi delegations from Swaziland and King Lerotholi of Lesotho's messengers all came to the oSuthu Palace for consultations.

During the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), the British military authorities placed KwaZulu under martial Law and ordered King Din^uzulu to arm the Zulu people to wage war against the Afrikaners in return for the restoration of the Vryheid District. The ensuing confrontation between the Zulu people and the Afrikaner burghers resulted in the killing of 56 Afrikaners on 6 May 1902 at Holkrantz. It was mentioned by some Afrikaner generals as one of the reasons for their signing the Peace of Vereening^{gr} on 31 May 1902. Thus in all national events Zulu kings featured prominently.

After the Poll Tax ^ersistance (Bhambatha rebellion) in 1906 (regarded as the last armed struggle within the borders of South Africa), King Din^uzulu was sentenced to four years imprisonment in 1909 and eventually banished to Rietfontein farm near Middel~~e~~burg in 1910, for harbouring Inkosi Bhambatha Zondi and his wife during the resistance. But before he died on 18 October 1913:

- a) The South African Native National Congress (later ANC) called upon all the people to collect money to enable the king to receive treatment at Carlsbad in Germany. Pixley kaIsaka Seme (the king's brother-in-law) collected monies in the Transvaal, Burd Mbelle in the Cape and Free State and Dr John Dube in Natal. Although the collection was prohibited by the Natal government, but it should be clear to us that the Zulu King's role in national matters was regarded as significant even by non-Zulu people.

The present Zulu King's grandfather King Solomon also played an important role in national events. The same applies to King Bhekuzulu.

What should also be kept in mind is the fact that all Zulu kings' prime ministers served them loyally. In November 1909, for example, King Din^Uzulu's prime minister was given a choice of being ^{freed} on a bail of 50 pounds ~~or~~ remain with the King in Pietermaritzburg Central prison. He easily chose to remain in prison.

Therefore, the participation of King Goodwill Zwelithini at Codesa is of vital importance. It is in line with previous historical events in the Zulu nation. The Zulu people are

over 7 million. It was revealed by the Freiberg Conference in 1978 that 60% of the Africans living in Soweto at that time were Zulu people.

The fact that the Zulu people unanimously regard King Zwelithini as their King augurs well for the eventual acceptance of the constitution emanating from Codesa if the King participates in the constitutional deliberations. It has already been stated that for all matters concerning land boundaries Zulu kings were involved. The new constitution which will eventually be produced by Codesa will result in the shifting of the existing boundaries in South Africa.

Lastly, it seems to me that the refusal of participation in Codesa by Prime Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi is in line with the history of all prime ministers of the Zulu nation. Their first loyalty was to their kings as outlined above.

With regard to item 1(1): "Participants in the Convention shall be the political parties, the South African Government, organisations and administrations listed in the Annexure hereto."

I strongly recommend ~~that~~ this item be amended to accommodate

King Goodwill Zwelithini of the Zulu people. The Management Committee of Codesa should resist the temptation of making Codesa a rigid middle class political exercise which will be meaningless in the eyes of millions of fellow South Africans.

- b) The participation of traditional leaders of other African peoples in South Africa.

These traditional leaders are the following:

- aa) Qwa-Qwa: The traditional Leaders in this territory are linked to the powerful kingdom of Lesotho founded by King Moshoeshoe in 1824. They played a vital role during the British invasion of Lesotho 1849-1853 and during the Afrikaner invasion (1855-1868).
- bb) Kwa-Ndebele: The traditional leaders in this territory should not be confused with the followers of Mzilikazi Khumalo, former prime minister of King Shaka, who settled in the Transvaal in 1826-1837. These ^{NGUNI} ~~Sethe~~-speaking Ndzundza or Transvaal Ndebele came from the South-east Transvaal at a much earlier period. Their traditional leader was Mabhogo. His land was beaoned off by the Republican authorities in 1860. The Ndzudza fought war against the Afrikaner Republic in 1860-

1865. Mabhogo died in 1865. In 1876 the Ndzudza supported the burghers, and in 1879 Wolseley against the Pedi. In 1883 Mabhogo's successor Nyabela was attacked and defeated by the Boer Commando. The Ndzudza Ndebele territory was divided among members of the invaders.

cc) KwaNgwane: The history of the traditional leaders in this territory is similar to that of the kingdom of Swaziland.

dd) Lebowa: The well-known traditional leaders of the BaPedi are Sekwati who was succeeded by Sikhukhuni in 1862. They fought numerous wars with Afrikaner and British authorities until September 1879 when three of Sikhukhuni's brothers and nine of his sons were killed.

ee) Venda: One of the greatest Venda traditional leaders, Ramabulana died in 1864. Thereafter rivalry ensued between his sons, Davhana and Machado. The latter eventually won. The Venda traditional leaders fought war against the South African Republic in 1867. After Machado's death in 1895 another rivalry erupted between Sinthomule and Mphephu. The latter was driven across the Limpopo in 1898.

ff) Gazankulu: Some of the traditional leaders in Gazankulu are

directly linked to Soshangane who fled KwaZulu after the defeat of the Ndwandwe by King Shaka. Soshangane dominated the Tsonga and Thonga subjects until his death in 1858.

gg) The Transkei and Ciskei: The ^opolitical systems of the traditional leaders in these territories were loosely structured. They belonged politically to distinct clusters of which the Xhosa, Thembu, Mpondo, Mpondomise and Bomvana were the most important.

Other groups, for example, amaBhele, amaZizi and amaHlubi were collectively referred to as "amaMfengu" in the 1830s. During the nineteenth Century the BhaCa people, the Xesibe and Ntlangwini also arrived in the area.

The Xhosa people were therefore united under many traditional leaders. At the beginning of the nineteenth century further political divisions occurred when Ndlambe of the Rharhabe and Ngqika of the Gcaleka separated.

The Xhosa people fought numerous wars against the British imperialists until their defeat in 1894.

The participation of traditional leaders in Codesa may

necessitate bigger venue to accommodate them. This problem of numbers can also be solved by limiting the number of traditional leaders to be dispatched from each territory.