

CHAPTER 5

SOME CONSEQUENCES OF THE FORCED REMOVAL OF THE BAKWENA BA MAGOPA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to establish and analyse some consequences of the forced removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa. These will include social, economic, political and infrastructural consequences. The struggle to return home (in which the Bakwena ba Mogopa were engaged since their removal until they ultimately returned home), will be discussed.

5.2 THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Social consequences will include education, disruption of family life and relations with the ancestors, health services and religious life.

5.2.1 Consequences on family life and the relationship with the ancestors

Firstly the forced removal disrupted the people's lives and especially normal community life.¹ The forced removal politically divided some families permanently. There were disagreements on whether to accept or resist the removal. One family disintegrated into three, the father moving to Bethanie, the mother to Modikwe and later to Onderstepoort, while their eldest daughter remained at Pachsdraai. This destroyed parental authority in some families, especially as a result of the absence of the male head of the family. Due to the forced removal, the workers could no longer commute daily to and from work. This increased the absence of the heads of families. This also caused stress to the people, especially women, who found themselves in the most

¹ Transvaal Rural Action Committee (TRAC), "Mogopa", *Newsletter*, no. 15, September 1990, p.2.

unenviable position of having to play the role of mother as well as that of head of the family. This became even more difficult where there were male members of the household who had not yet reached puberty, a stage at which the firm hand of the father should be felt. Men had to leave their homes to look for work in urban areas (towns and cities) as migrant labourers. Not all migrants readily found jobs in the urban areas. Some of them found employment illegally in the towns of "white" South Africa as they were not entitled to jobs without the necessary urban qualifications.²

Secondly, the African communities in general regard land as the place of the ancestors to whom they appeal in times of crises.³ The Bakwena ba Mogopa, like all black communities, have strong ties with their ancestors at Mogopa in the Ventersdorp district. When Mr. B. Pooe was asked about their forced removal, he said his father used to rise early in the morning, looked at the fields, then turned to the cattle post and then to the hill and said: "the fields honour me, the cattle honour me, the hills honour me".⁴ This is an indication of how attached people were to their ancestral land. This culture emphasises the continuity of generations that demands that people should live with the spirits, amongst the ashes and bones of their forefathers. It would be a disgrace for the present generation to allow assets and improvements, including land built by the previous generation, to be destroyed. It would be cursed and remembered as a generation which lost Mogopa. The meaning of their lives and position as future ancestors would be destroyed.⁵

The forced removal had broken the continuity of generations and the ties of the people and their ancestors. This created trauma and insecurity among the

² D. Molefe, **personal interview**, 3 April 1996; J.S. Motlhamme, **Forced removals in the people's memory: The Bakubung of Ledig**, p.18; D. Oakes (ed.), **Illustrated history of South Africa: The real story**, p.428.

³ J.S. Motlhamme, **Forced removals in the people's memory: The Bakubung of Ledig**, p.19.

⁴ B. Pooe, **personal interview**, 3 April 1996.

⁵ Cheadle Thompson and Haysom Attorneys (CTH), Johannesburg, Mogopa removal papers: H. Winkler, Land proposal for Mogopa, Annexure 2, July 1990, pp.2-3; **North West Mirror**, 3-6 July 1997.

Bakwena ba Mogopa. The problems they faced after their removal (such as diseases and a high death rate) were perceived as a sign of displeasure by their ancestors they had left behind at Mogopa. This was one of the important reasons why the Bakwena ba Mogopa constantly requested for permission to return home to tend to the graves. It was an attempt by a community that was aware of its obligation to please their ancestors.⁶

In conclusion, the forced removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa had a negative impact on family and community life. Some families were permanently split up. This also disrupted the people's relationship with their ancestors, as they had to leave their ancestors' graves behind. The Government ignored the African tradition of continuity of generations and deliberately removed the Bakwena ba Mogopa from the place of their ancestors.

5.2.2 Consequences with regard to health services

During their years of wandering after their forced removal, the Bakwena ba Mogopa had little access to services essential for human life. The Pachsdraai group had a health clinic, but it was never fully operational. There were often complaints about a shortage of staff to the extent that it was sometimes closed for a period of up to six months. The group that moved to Bethanie remained destitute under appalling conditions. They had very little access to health services and clean water. Some of them had exhausted their compensation money and could not even buy water drawn by donkey carts.⁷

The group that returned to Mogopa since 1991 also faced problems. There was no professional medical care at Mogopa except a visit from a **Namda** doctor⁸ once a month. They experienced transport problems to Ventersdorp where they could get professional medical care and services, because there

⁶ CTH, Johannesburg, Mogopa removal papers: H. Walker, Land proposal for Mogopa, Annexure 2, July 1990, p.13; The National Land Committee (NLC), "3M SA rejoiced with the Bakwena: One company did its bit to help victims of forced removals", **Land update**, no. 35, December 1994, p.15.

⁷ TRAC, "And now we have no land: An update on the struggle of the Mogopa people," **Newsletter**, no.3 August 1987, p.3; M. Kgatitsoe, **personal interview**, 3 April 1996.

⁸ They referred to a foreign doctor.

were no buses and taxis. Private transport was very expensive and they could not afford it. As far as water was concerned, there was only one borehole which was shared with about two hundred cows belonging to a neighbouring white farmer.⁹

5.2.3 Consequences with regard to religious life

The forced removal had shaken the religious life of the Bakwena ba Mogopa. It disrupted the moral life of some of the people and this negatively affected both social and religious life.

A night before their forced removal, the Bakwena ba Mogopa held a night virgil with the help of Archbishop D. Tutu, Rev. F. Chikane and Dr. A. Boesak. When they were eventually removed, their faith was shaken. They started questioning whether the white people were also Christians. One old man went as far as to say that if blacks were Christians, then whites were not, or then God was not for blacks. Members of the different denominations found themselves scattered in a number of settlements after their removal. This made it difficult for the members of the small churches to continue to hold church services.¹⁰

5.2.4 Consequences with regard to education

Before the removal, the Bakwena ba Mogopa had two schools at Mogopa - Swartkop Primary School and Kutlwano Secondary School. The latter catered for Form 1 to Form V (Matric).¹¹ These schools even accommodated children of neighbouring farms and black areas. There was stability in the schools at that time and there were no significant educational problems except those problems that affected almost all schools in rural areas, namely the problem

⁹ NLC, "Mogopa", **Land update**, no.2, June 1990, p.3; M. Kgatitsoe, **personal interview**, 3 April 1996.

¹⁰ D. Molofe, **personal interview**, 3 April 1996.

¹¹ CTH, Johannesburg, Mogopa removal papers: H. Winkler, Land proposal for Mogopa, Annexure 2, July 1990, p.5.

of unqualified or underqualified teachers. There were a few underqualified teachers at Mogopa schools.¹²

The forced removal brought about new educational problems and increased those that were already common to rural areas. Education was vulnerable to disruption, as schools relied on the stability of the community to function. The forced removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa had disrupted individuals' and community life. For a period of six years following the forced removal, almost three hundred children of the group which resisted the forced removals were left without schooling. The group was wandering from one place to another and education was not a priority.¹³

The Pachsdraai group also faced educational problems. Although the Government had erected three new schools at Pachsdraai before the removal to serve as an incentive to make people move, education suffered. Resistance to the forced removal affected the school system. The liberation struggle slogan of "liberation first, education later", gained momentum. Some pupils were incited by their parents, who were opposed to the removal to disregard the school authorities. The pupils were therefore not co-operative and disruption of classes often took place as a sign of opposition to the removal. The forced removal had by and large destroyed parental authority, because some families had disintegrated. Some pupils were left at Pachsdraai to continue their education when their parents left Pachsdraai for Bethanie in protest against the forced removal or when some parents left to work in urban areas. There was no proper supervision over children.¹⁴

Generally speaking, the secondary school at Pachsdraai, Maphiradira, proved to be of a low standard in terms of examination results and discipline. It accommodated students from different areas such as Uitkyk, Koffiekraal, Carletonville, Klerksdorp and Potchefstroom. These pupils were admitted

¹² R.G. Khutshoane, **personal interview**, 18 July 1997.

¹³ TRAC, "Mogopa", **Newsletter**, no.15, September 1990, p.2; NLC, "Mogopa", **Land update**, no.2, June 1990, p.3.

¹⁴ T.G. Machete, **personal interview**, 10 March 1997.

indiscriminately because there was sufficient accommodation, as there were few local pupils. Some of these pupils left their former schools after they had failed several times or they had been expelled as a result of bad behaviour. Maphiradira served as a dumping place for such pupils. These pupils were accommodated in the shacks left by the people who refused to stay at Pachsdraai. These shacks became centres of immorality and some were turned into shebeens. Pupils held parties even during the day when they were supposed to be at school. The high failure rate was also caused by the employment of unqualified teachers. Many qualified teachers had resigned due to conflict within the community because of the forced removal, causing uncertainty among teachers. The teachers were also discouraged by the unfavourable conditions under which they worked. Accommodation was poor, and they lived in shacks.¹⁵

The group who resettled at Onderstepoort also experienced problems with regard to education. They were offered a fourteen room school to house 940 pupils catering for pupils from Grade 1 to Grade 12 (Matric). There were only 23 teachers. The number of pupils was increased by pupils from other tribes. Onderstepoort, like Pachsdraai, often experienced problems with class boycotts. Political interference by the African National Congress (ANC) and the Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO) as the opposing forces in the liberation struggle, resulted in the expulsion of the principal, Mr. S. Ntsimane and eighteen teachers from the school. The principal was accused of favouring the white officials who failed to resolve the educational problems. The principal had rescued a white official who was held hostage when he visited the area in an attempt to resolve the educational crisis. Instead of resolving the problem, the Government, the Premier and the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education replaced the eighteen teachers with 35 other teachers. The eighteen teachers were charged with desertion. This was a political game, as the Government tried to buy support at the expense

¹⁵ J.R. More, *personal interview*, 10 January 1994; T.G. Machete, *personal interview*, 10 March 1997.

of the expelled teachers. The Potchefstroom Education office and Mr. D. van Wyk, a personal advisor to the MEC for Education, resolved the issue by distributing them among the schools in the Rustenburg district. These events did great harm to the education of the children at Onderstepoort.¹⁶

The return to the ancestral land, Mogopa, was also not without educational problems. The people returned to a shanty town. The school building was also a shack and not conducive to both teaching and learning activities. In summer it became too hot, while in winter it became too cold.¹⁷ The former Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) had promised the Bakwena ba Mogopa development assistance to erect a better school, but in 1993 confessed that it had no budget for developments.¹⁸ The school could only accommodate pupils up to Standard 7 and pupils who had passed Standard 7 had to look for other schools to further their studies. Attempts to introduce standards up to Matric classes were also hampered by the fact that the teachers at Regorogile School were not suitably qualified and could not teach Matric pupils.¹⁹

In conclusion, the forced removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa seriously disrupted the education of the children of Mogopa. There was no proper schooling, as some members of the community moved from one area to the other as they refused to stay at Mogopa. A shortage of qualified teachers also had a negative impact on education. The educational problems were further compounded by the influence of the liberation struggle. The liberation struggle's slogan of "liberation first, education later", affected many pupils to concentrate on the resistance to the removal and to neglect their studies.

¹⁶ T.S. Sekhu, **personal interview**, 20 July 1997; H.R. Noge, **personal interview**, 20 July 1997; S. Ntsimane, **personal interview**, 20 November 1997.

¹⁷ NLC, "Mogopa Development Forum", **Land update**, no.37, April/May 1995, p.15.

¹⁸ TRAC, "Development and returns to the land", **Annual report 1993-1994**, December 1994, p.15.

¹⁹ A. Boikanyo, **personal interview**, 3 April 1996; South African Council of Churches (SACC), Braamfontein, Mogopa removal papers: Minutes of the meeting held at Regorogile Intermediate Farm School on 15 November 1993.

5.3 ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE FORCED REMOVAL OF THE BAKWENA BA MOGOPA

Economic consequences discussed in this section include consequences with regard to agriculture, the loss of property and the compensation paid to the people. A comparative analysis of the economic situation at Mogopa and Pachsdraai will be made. The issue of land will also receive attention.

5.3.1 Consequences with regard to agriculture

5.3.1.1 Crop farming

The forced removal had moved the Bakwena ba Mogopa to a different agricultural zone. Mogopa is a well-watered fertile area in the Maize Triangle, while Pachsdraai is bushveld, not suitable for maize production. The forced removal radically changed the traditional type of both agricultural and social systems of the Bakwena ba Mogopa as practised at Mogopa. The Bakwena ba Mogopa could no longer utilise the land to its full advantage. Farming at Pachsdraai in a bushveld zone depended entirely on capital intensive farming. Crop production is dependent on irrigation, which required a large initial capital outlay. The area is more suitable for cash crops such as citrus and tobacco than subsistence crops such as maize, beans and sorghum.²⁰

Another consequence of the same conditions was the labour requirements regarding irrigation agriculture, which differed from maize production. Irrigation schemes require a permanent intensive skilled workforce to maximise the use of capital assets. The labourers require training and experience. These requirements could not accommodate migrant labour which also contributed to the economic conditions of the Bakwena ba Mogopa at Mogopa.²¹

²⁰ CTH, Johannesburg, Mogopa removal papers: H. Winkler, Land proposal for Mogopa, Annexure 2, July 1990, pp.8-9; G.M. Mompei, **Factors and events which led to the political independence of Bophuthatswana 1950-1977**, (unp. M.A. dissertation, PU for CHE, 1994), p.118.

²¹ CTH, Johannesburg, Mogopa removal papers: H. Winkler, Land proposal for Mogopa, Annexure 2, July 1990, p.9.

The subsistence farming system which provided opportunities for all sections of the community to be involved in agriculture during various cycles in the year, was destroyed. Benefits accrued could no longer be spread throughout the whole community. The cash flow from migrant labour was also affected. Many migrant workers found it difficult to join the community 150 km away from work. They opted to buy or rent houses permanently in the towns where they were employed. The economic balance between crop production and cash flow broke down and agriculture could no longer be boosted by this cash flow. The Bakwena ba Mogopa found themselves without their economic symbiotic relationship between subsistence agriculture and migrant labour, which was permanently destroyed by their forced removal.²²

The return of the Bakwena ba Mogopa to Mogopa since 1991 did not bring any immediate relief. Their original agricultural system seemed to have been permanently destroyed. The ploughing committee mobilises the community as a whole for agricultural production and the proceeds are to be shared among all involved. This new practice breaks the old Mogopa practice whereby the individual or family drew the benefit from land by working it while land ownership rested with the tribe.²³

The forced removal also destroyed the original land tenure system of the Bakwena ba Mogopa. The system was based on share-cropping, which led to high land utilization and the spread of the benefits of the crops between entrepreneurial farmers as well as old people and migrant workers who could not or did not want to plough their fields themselves. Their established relations with the local co-operations (Ventersdorp and Koster) where they ordered their requirements and sold their produce, were also disrupted by

²² CTH, Johannesburg, Mogopa removal papers: H. Winkler, Land proposal for Mogopa, Annexure 2, January 1990, p.9; **Finance Weekly**, 11-17 June 1992.

²³ **Finance Weekly**, 11-17 June 1992.

their forced removal. They lost contact with the co-operations and lacked transport to Ventersdorp and Koster.²⁴

To summarise, the forced removal seriously disrupted the lives of the farming community of the Bakwena ba Mogopa. After they were forcibly moved to a different agricultural zone, it became difficult for them to re-establish themselves. The area was not suitable for subsistence crops such as maize they were used to. They were forced into an area of capital intensive farming which demanded complex machinery and a permanent skilled workforce. These demands forced many Bakwena ba Mogopa to give up farming as they could not afford expensive capital intensive equipments and neither had the skilled workforce.

5.3.1.2 Loss of livestock

Loss of livestock constituted one of the greatest losses sustained by the Bakwena ba Mogopa as a result of the forced removal. Many people claimed to have lost livestock at Mogopa and Pachsdraai.²⁵ At Mogopa, immediately before the removal to Pachsdraai, the people were forced to sell their livestock. This was an attempt by the State to minimise transport costs to Pachsdraai. The people were desperate after being delayed due to the resistance to the removal. They had to sell their livestock quickly and this provided opportunities for the white farmers, the only available buyers, to buy livestock at knockdown prices. The livestock was bought at a tenth of its value.²⁶ In some cases, a cow was bought for R100 or R200. This was a great

²⁴ C. Murray and O'Regan (eds.), **No place to rest: Forced removals and the law in South Africa**, p.56.

²⁵ Land Affairs Department (LAD), Pretoria, file no. T8/7/2/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, p.10.

²⁶ C. Murray and C. O'Regan (eds.), **No place to rest: Forced removals and the law in South Africa**, p.20; F. Wilson & M. Ramphela, **Uprooting poverty: The South African challenge**, pp.219-220; Mogopa Tribal Office (MTO), Pachsdraai, Minutes of a meeting held at Mogopa on the 17 January 1983.

loss for the community.²⁷ A total of 38 cattle were claimed to have been left at Mogopa during the removal.²⁸

Some of the people who left Pachsdraai for Bethanie lost their livestock at Pachsdraai. It was not possible for them to take cattle immediately when they left. They claimed that when they returned to collect the cattle, they were either prevented by the Pachsdraai authorities or were told that their cattle had died or had been stolen. There was nothing the department could do in that regard, except the assurance given by Mr. Cornelius, the Zeerust Commissioner, that he would accompany them to the kraals to identify their cattle. That never materialised.²⁹ Although Pachsdraai is bushveld, suitable for cattle farming, very few people continued with cattle farming. The forced removal had destroyed the farming capacity of many people.³⁰

Some members of the tribe lost their donkeys on which they depended for ploughing and transport. They were told that the donkeys would not be taken along to Pachsdraai.³¹ They were, however, not compensated for this loss. This further impoverished them.³²

Almost all the people at Pachsdraai lost their chickens which had suffocated in the blazing heat during their long journey from Mogopa to Pachsdraai. Pauline Molwantwa alone lost sixteen chickens. The dead chickens, the first victims of the forced removal, littered the "promised land", Pachsdraai. It was a great loss to the people, however the Government regarded this as a minor loss not even warranting a claim. No compensation was paid in this regard.³³

²⁷ D. Molefe, **personal interview**, 3 April 1996.

²⁸ LAD, Pretoria, file no. T8/7/2/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, pp.10-11.

²⁹ LAD, Pretoria, file no. T8/7/2/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, p.10.

³⁰ B.M. Rampou, **personal interview**, 24 May 1995.

³¹ MTO, Pachsdraai, Minutes of a meeting held at Mogopa on 17 January 1983.

³² LAD, Pretoria, file no. T8/7/2/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, p.12.

³³ **City Press**, 19 February 1984.

The forced removal resulted in loss of livestock by the Bakwena ba Mogopa. Some lost their cattle through the sales where they were forced to sell their stock at far below its value. Some cattle were lost as people moved from one area to another. People who depended on donkeys for their economic activities lost them, as they were not allowed to take them along to Pachsdraai. People also lost their chickens. All these losses impoverished the Bakwena ba Mogopa.

5.3.2 The issue of compensation

One of the issues relative to the removal was compensation for losses. Before and after the removal the members of the Bakwena ba Mogopa tribe were assured that appropriate compensation would be paid to them in respect of their losses incurred by the forced removal. This included compensation for houses and other fixed property, furniture and livestock.³⁴ This was a sensitive issue and it was never satisfactorily concluded, as will be shown in this section.

Attempts were made through the lawyers of the tribe, Cheadle Thompson and Haysom Attorneys, to resolve the issue with the commissioner, the Zeerust magistrate and the officials of the Department of Co-operation, Development and Education. The department was presented with a long list of property left at Mogopa, such as rolls of fencing wire, water drums, ploughs and bricks. It was further given a list of items damaged in transit to Pachsdraai and personal property and goods left at Pachsdraai after being transported from Mogopa.³⁵

It was difficult for the department to compensate the people for the damaged goods in the submitted lists, because no proper and extensive evaluation of the goods to be transported to Pachsdraai had been done before the

³⁴ LAD, Pretoria, file no. T8/7/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, p.1

³⁵ LAD, Pretoria, file no. T8/7/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, pp.2-4.

removal. There was no record of the condition of every item transported, making it difficult to assess the extent of the damage. Late submissions of claims also compounded the problem already mentioned and ultimately the list was not attended to. No compensation was paid in this regard. As for the goods left at Pachsdraai by a group that moved to Bethanie, no claim was entertained. The responsibility of the Government ended when the goods were unloaded at Pachsdraai.³⁶

Claims for compensation with regard to the cattle left at Mogopa, were dismissed. The Government claimed that it had instructed the people to move their cattle to one particular kraal and the cattle and livestock in that kraal were all transported to Pachsdraai. The department could not take responsibility for the cattle that were not brought to the designated kraal. Chickens as stated earlier, were regarded by the department as a minor loss, which did not even warrant a claim.³⁷

Claims for compensation with regard to crops which were not harvested due to the forced removal, were never met. The claimants demanded compensation on the grounds that they could not harvest their crops because they were not allowed to enter Mogopa after the forced removal. The Government, on the other hand, dismissed the claims on the basis that the people were informed in advance not to plough or erect houses. The department argued that it could not be held responsible.³⁸

Compensation for houses revealed inequalities and resulted in great disappointments. People with similar houses were paid different amounts. Mr. Jerry Makhapela received R1403,00 for a six-roomed house and a

³⁶ LAD, Pretoria, file no. T8/7/2/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, pp.5-8; LAD, Pretoria, file no. T8/7/2/2/V13/19: Mogopa claims for compensation lodged with the Zeerust Magistrate by Cheadle Thompson and Haysom attorneys, 28 May 1984, p.3.

³⁷ LAD, Pretoria, file no T8/7/2/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, pp.10-11.

³⁸ LAD, Pretoria, file no T8/7/2/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, pp.5-8; CTH, Johannesburg, Mogopa removal papers: H. Winkler, Land proposal for Mogopa, Annexure 2, July 1990, p.3

reservoir, while Mr. Gerson Rampou received R1300,00 for a six-roomed house, peach trees, a kraal and reservoir. Some houses constructed of mud and grass were valued at R90,00 each and termed **gras en modder werke**.³⁹ It was unfortunate that standards used to evaluate the people's property were determined by white officials who used European standards. This subjectivity and inconsistency resulted in economic loss for the Bakwena ba Mogopa.

To conclude this section, compensation was never paid to the satisfaction of the Bakwena ba Mogopa. Those who lost their cattle because they were never transported from Mogopa to Pachsdraai were not compensated as the department claimed the people were told to bring their livestock to a designated kraal. The same happened to those who claimed compensation for crops. They were told that they were warned in advance not to plant any crop. The department ignored the fact that the people had resisted the forced removal until the point when they were forcibly removed. These people could not comply with the instruction to bring cattle to a particular kraal or the warning not to plant crops. As far as claims regarding goods damaged in transit to Pachsdraai are concerned, the department could not determine compensation because there were no records on the condition of the items before the removal. It was difficult for the department to assess the extent of the damage. There was also disparities in compensation paid for houses.

5.3.3 Consequences with regard to the land

The Bakwena ba Mogopa lost their land, Mogopa, for a short period. They were left desolate after they were forcibly moved to Pachsdraai, an area in the former far Western Transvaal (North-West Province).⁴⁰ They thought with longing of the place of rich farmlands, beautiful landscape and bush vegetation - Mogopa. Mogopa was more fertile and well-watered than

³⁹ LAD, Pretoria, file no. T8/7/2/2/V13/19: Memorandum on aspects of compensation arising out of the removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, 21 March 1985, pp.17-18; **North West Mirror**, 3-6 July 1997.

⁴⁰ NLC, "3M SA rejoiced with the Bakwena: One company did its best to help victims of forced removal," **Land update**, no.35, December 1994, p.12.

Pachsdraai. Pachsdraai really became a promised land of broken hearts and tortured souls.⁴¹

On 6 September 1987 the Government offered the Bakwena ba Mogopa temporary accommodation at Onderstepoort (near the present-day Sun City) in the Rustenburg area. This was an attempt by the Government to avert the re-occupation of Mogopa by the Bakwena ba Mogopa refugees from Bethanie, Madikwe and Barseba. Onderstepoort was a desolate and barren area. The area was initially prepared for the resettlement of the Bakubung of Mathope from Mathopestad. They had successfully resisted the forced removal. The Bakwena ba Mogopa accepted this as a temporary compromise to keep the community intact while they would continue to fight to return home.⁴²

Since 1991 many people of the Bakwena ba Mogopa left Onderstepoort and returned to the ancestral land, Mogopa. The return of the two farms comprising Mogopa, Swartrand and Hartebeeslaagte in 1991 and 1994 respectively, turned events in favour of the Bakwena ba Mogopa. In the long run the Bakwena ba Mogopa gained more land than their original land.⁴³ The Bakwena ba Mogopa were allowed to retain property rights at Pachsdraai and Onderstepoort.⁴⁴ The Pachsdraai group has the title deed of Pachsdraai and has indicated that they will not return to Mogopa. The Onderstepoort group also indicated their willingness to settle permanently at Onderstepoort. The Government has no mechanism to convince them to join their tribal folk at Mogopa.⁴⁵ The Mogopa group had returned to their ancestral land and occupies Mogopa legally. They obtained the title deeds for their two farms, Swartrand and Hartebeeslaagte.⁴⁶ These events expose flaws in the land

⁴¹ **City Press**, 19 February 1984.

⁴² **The Star**, 7 September 1987.

⁴³ Personal letter, S. Marr/B.K.M. Molokoe, 24 May 1996.

⁴⁴ J. Small and H. Winkler (compilers), **Botho Sechabeng: A feeling of community**, p.9.

⁴⁵ "Mogopa celebrate ploughing of the first furrow", **Land infor**, no. 3, November/December 1994, p.19.

⁴⁶ **Seipone**, 3 Phatwe (August) 1994; M. Kgatitsoe, **personal interview**, 3 April 1996; **Finance Weekly**, 11-17 June 1992.

restitution process, because communities started to exploit the process to gain more land than they had lost through forced removals.

As indicated in this section, the forced removals disadvantaged the Bakwena ba Mogopa in the short-term. They lost their ancestral land when they were settled at Pachsdraai, but in the long run gained from the forced removal. They gained three areas - Mogopa, Pachsdraai and Onderstepoort. Although they settled in these three areas as separate groups, they are all members of the Bakwena ba Mogopa and the gained land is for the community members and they are free to settle wherever they wish.

5.4 CONSEQUENCES WITH REGARD TO THE INTERNAL POLITICAL ORGANISATION OF THE BAKWENA BA MOGOPA

Politically, the forced removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa resulted in the division of the community and the destruction of the political and administrative system.

The forced removal divided the Bakwena ba Mogopa community which was once a very closeknit and united community. The community was exiled to Pachsdraai, some refused to stay at Pachsdraai and moved to Bethanie and Onderstepoort. Before 1991, they were prohibited to go back to Mogopa.⁴⁷ The group that went to Bethanie found themselves reduced to the status of refugees among the other Bakwena and their relatives. They were split into three groups and settled at three different villages, Madikwe, Barseba and Bethanie. The three groups regarded Shadrack More as their leader. These groups were forbidden to hold meetings except in the chief's presence. Because they had resisted the forced removal, they were regarded as lawbreakers and were constantly harrassed by the police and taken for

⁴⁷ NLC, "3M SA rejoiced with the Bakwena: One company did its bit to help victims of forced removal," *Land update*, no. 35, December 1994, p.16.

questioning. They were further ill-treated by their hosts, the Bethanie community, who regarded them as immigrants (**bontholeng**).⁴⁸

Most of the Bethanie group moved to Onderstepoort as a temporary settlement in 1987 to avoid the hardships they experienced at Bethanie.⁴⁹ Their settlement at Onderstepoort was not a relief, as they immediately experienced a power struggle among those who claimed to be royalists. The problem was further complicated by the political rivalry between the ANC and AZAPO. The two political organisations opposed any form of tribal authority and tribal leadership associated with headmanship. Civil war broke out and some people were killed. One woman known as Mmadiboko was cruelly stoned to death before she was set alight. The Boshhoek police restored order. Some families fled to Mogopa, while others joined villages such as Ledig.⁵⁰

At Pachsdraai, political problems were also experienced. Although the people had agreed to settle in that area, the new political dispensation in South Africa since 1989, which included the unbanning of political organisations such as the ANC, affected the Bakwena ba Mogopa at Pachsdraai. The people were influenced to demand to be given the real reasons why they were removed from Mogopa. In 1990, matters became worse when the people accused **kgosana** Jacob More for the disappearance of the material of the schools destroyed at Mogopa. Material had been kept in a large store at **kgosana** More's residence and its disappearance surprised and angered many people. This split the community into two groups and there was even a threat of civil war. **Kgosana** Jacob More fled from Pachsdraai to Witzieshoek in QwaQwa where he spent the year in self-imposed exile among friends and relatives. Pachsdraai was then ruled by a self-appointed committee of five

⁴⁸ E. Unterhalter, **Forced removal: The division, segregation and control of the people of South Africa**, p.113; C. Murray and C. Oregan (eds.), **No place to rest: Forced removal and the law in South Africa**, p.110.

⁴⁹ **The Star**, 7 September 1987.

⁵⁰ J.R. More, **personal interview**, 10 January 1994; T.S. Sekhu, **personal interview**, 20 July 1997.

persons under Lawrence Kau. Other members were H.R. Noge, Ben Bodibe (secretary), R. Tladinyane and "professor"⁵¹ Molaba. The other section of the community at Pachsdraai wanted to instal T.S. More, the youngest son of **kgosana** Thomas Matladi More, as their **kgosana**. This was opposed by the other section of the community, who regarded T.S. More as being pro-Bophuthatswana. T.S. More had declined the headmanship in 1978 and opted to serve the Bophuthatswana Government as consul in Coligny. The section which opposed his installation as **kgosana** feared that he would stand for the incorporation of Pachsdraai into Bophuthatswana. The committee of five was instructed by the section opposing the appointment of T.S. More to request **kgosana** Jacob More to return. He was assured that the problem had been allowed to rest and his return unified the community.⁵²

The Mogopa group also experienced political and administrative problems. A number of changes in their political, traditional and administrative systems took place. Their traditional administrative office of headmanship had been totally destroyed by the forced removal. The Mogopa group claims that this was because their last **kgosana** (headman), Jacob More, had misused the office and betrayed the tribe with regard to the forced removal. There is no longer a **kgosana** to administer the affairs of the tribe, but an elected planning committee.⁵³

Since the Bakwena ba Mogopa's return to Mogopa in 1991, there were no appropriate form of governance at Mogopa. The elected committee and its subcommittees which are responsible for providing water and ploughing, has no legal status. This created tension between the traditional members and elected representatives. The old traditional people within the committee continually challenged the authority of the young men and women on the committee. The newly adopted tribal policy, which provides for democratically

⁵¹ "Professor" was a nickname and he was commonly called prof. Molaba.

⁵² H.R. Noge, **personal interview**, 20 July 1997; J.R. More, **personal interview**, 10 January 1994.

⁵³ TRAC, "Return to the Land", **Newsletter**, no. 19, November 1991.

elected structures, was continually being challenged by the tribal elders. There was no trust or legal structure to take ownership tribal assets.⁵⁴

The chances of the reunion of the members of the Bakwena ba Mogopa who had resided at Mogopa before the forced removal, seem remote. **Kgosana** Shadrack More dismissed any possible reconciliation with the Pachsdraai group. It is believed that this group under the leadership of **kgosana** Jacob More had "sold" Mogopa and betrayed the tribe.⁵⁵

Kgosana Jacob More on his part, believes that there was a possibility of reconciliation, because even if the Bakwena ba Mogopa found themselves occupying three different areas, they remained members of the same tribe - the Bakwena ba Mogopa. The Bakwena ba Mogopa gained three pieces of land, Pachsdraai, Mogopa and Onderstepoort. The members of the tribe are free to reside wherever they please in any of the three areas.⁵⁶ This sentiment is also shared by Mathews Kgatitsoe and Andrew Pooe, who are members of the Mogopa Development Forum at Mogopa. They expect all the Bakwena ba Mogopa to return home or to stay wherever they please. However, they should know that Mogopa is their ancestral land and they would be welcome to return home when they decided to do so.⁵⁷

The forced removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa brought some political problems and confusion. The tribe was divided into three groups, the Pachsdraai, Onderstepoort and Mogopa groups. Traditional authority was negatively affected. At Mogopa, after the return, it was replaced by an elected office of the Mogopa Development Forum. This created tension between the elected representatives and the traditional tribal people. The inclusion of women in the committee was challenged by the elders who did not understand the democratic process introduced to include women in participatory democracy. At Pachsdraai, the authority of the **kgosana** was

⁵⁴ **Finance Weekly**, 11-17 July 1992.

⁵⁵ S. More, **personal interview**, 28 September 1994.

⁵⁶ J.R. More, **personal interview**, 10 January 1994.

⁵⁷ M. Kgatitsoe, **personal interview**, 3 April 1996; **Seipone**, 13 Phatwe (August) 1994.

undermined when **kgosana More** was forced into exile in 1990. The tribe was also exploited by rival political organisations, for instance at Onderstepoort, where there was a power struggle between the ANC and AZAPO. The forced removal and internal conflict as a result of the influence of political organisations destroyed both the original political and tribal administration of the Bakwena ba Mogopa.

5.5 CONSEQUENCES WITH REGARD TO INFRASTRUCTURE

Consequences pertaining to infrastructure due to the forced removal of the Bakwena ba Mogopa, include fixed property (houses, schools) and services (electricity and water supply). This section will concentrate on Pachsdraai and Mogopa, which were the main settlements (Onderstepoort was occupied as a temporary settlement) .

The community lost much in the forced removal - houses, schools, boreholes, shops and churches.⁵⁸ Their houses, some built of bricks, stones and others from mud and grass, were destroyed before the forced removal. They were allocated tin houses (shacks) at Pachsdraai. The situation disappointed and disheartened many people. As explained by Elisa Kgatitsoe, a 70 year-old woman, the shacks were worse than her store rooms at Mogopa. The people were moved from a village to a shanty town.⁵⁹ Even ten years after the removal, the majority of the people still lived in the tin houses.

As far as schools were concerned, the Sate destroyed two schools at Mogopa and as compensation built three large modern schools at Pachsdraai. This would have constituted an excellent compensation should the whole community have decided to stay at Pachsdraai.⁶⁰ Those who returned to Mogopa from 1991, had to start erecting a school, Regorogile, which like other buildings, was a tin shack. The school accommodates only Grade 1 to

⁵⁸ TRAC, "Return to the Land", **Newsletter**, no.19, November 1991, p.6.

⁵⁹ **City Press**, 19 February 1984.

⁶⁰ R.G. Khutshoane, **personal interview**, 28 June 1995.

Standard 7 pupils, and it is hoped that it will be extended to accommodate pupils up to Matric.⁶¹

The forced removal delayed developments at Mogopa. Ten years later Mogopa lagged behind their neighbours such as the Motlatla. There are no basic services and facilities such as electricity, water supply, telephone and postal services. There are no proper roads and there are also transport problems to areas like Ventersdorp. Pachsdraai is in a better position than Mogopa, as electricity and water are supplied at Pachsdraai.⁶²

The forced removal destroyed the infrastructure at Mogopa. People who were moved from a village returned to a shanty town. Facilities such as schools, churches and boreholes had been deliberately destroyed and it was virtually impossible to rebuild or restore them. It was disheartening to leave a stone or brick house for a tin house. The community was set back for ten years in terms of self-development and that of their village.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The forced removal had all but destroyed the Bakwena ba Mogopa tribe. They were removed from the place of their ancestors and left insecure and traumatised. The Government failed and/or refused to understand the culture of continuity of generations. For the whole period in which the tribe wandered from one place to the other as a form of resistance to the forced removal, education suffered. Education is dependent on normal stable community life and for the Bakwena ba Mogopa, there was no normal community life since their forced removal. Education was constantly made the main target of the resisting and disillusioned groups. The parents who resisted the forced removal incited pupils to disregard the school authorities. The use of the liberation struggle slogan of "liberation first and education later", had a negative impact on the school system.

⁶¹ NLC, "Mogopa Development Forum", *Land update*, no. 37, April/May 1995.

⁶² M. Kgatitsoe, *personal interview*, 3 April 1996; D. Molefe, *personal interview*, 3 April 1996.

The members of the Bakwena ba Mogopa tribe were reduced to the status of refugees at Bethanie. They were forced to remain destitute under appalling conditions without basic services. There was no clean water and access to health services. Those who returned to Mogopa in 1991, found themselves in the same situation.

Both the social and religious life of the Bakwena ba Mogopa were disrupted. Some families were permanently divided as their members took different directions during and after the removal. Members of churches also became scattered because religion as a unifying factor was ignored during the forced removal. The disintegration of various congregations and the fact that they were forcibly removed even though they had spent the whole night praying to God to save them from the removal, had shaken their faith.

The forced removal had a negative impact on the economic conditions and development of the Bakwena ba Mogopa. They were taken to an area very different from that to which they were accustomed. Pachsdraai was very different from Mogopa. Having moved from a well-watered agricultural zone in the Maize Triangle to a dry bushveld agricultural zone, it was difficult and unreasonable to expect the community to farm the area. The area required capital intensive equipments such as irrigation schemes for production. The tribe had to move from subsistence farming to commercial farming due to the nature of crops suited to that area. This impoverished the community further. The community lost almost everything in the forced removal. The meagre compensation or lack thereof given for the lost livestock and property destroyed them both economically and morally.

As far as land is concerned, the Bakwena ba Mogopa in the long run gained more land than they had had before the removal. Their farms Swartrand and Hartebeeslaagte were restored to them. In addition they have property rights at Pachsdraai and the Onderstepoort group has the permission to stay at Onderstepoort. In this regard the forced removal was to their advantage.

Politically, the forced removal undermined and in some instances destroyed the tribal authority. The Bakwena ba Mogopa resident at Mogopa are without traditional forms of governance. Attempts to transform traditional authority into the new policy of participatory democracy, proved to be a disaster. There is constant tension between the elected representatives and traditional tribal elders. This problem seems to be of a permanent nature.

The forced removal delayed development at Mogopa. On their return, the Bakwena ba Mogopa found themselves far behind the other tribes. There is no electricity, water supply and other services at Mogopa. They are trying to rebuild what was destroyed by the Government during the removal, but it will take time to develop their village to their expected standards.