

The Great Place. 5/6/1883
Pondoland, South Africa

1st August 1883

To the
Aborigines Protection Society
London. -

Gentlemen, -

I have the honor to
inform you that I wish to send a deputation
for the purpose of representing to the Imperial
Government the unsatisfactory relations that
exist between the Cape of Good Hope Government
and myself. -

For the information of your society I
will give you a brief outline of what has
led to the present unsatisfactory state of
affairs. -

The Treaty of 1844 made between the
Imperial Government and my father Faku-
the then Paramount Chief - recognise his

sovereignty over all the tribes and Country
from the sea to the Drakenberg Mountains
bounded on the East by the Umzimkulu River
from its source to its mouth, on the West by
the Umkata River from its source to its mouth.

At the request of the Natal and Cape
Governments several large tracts of land have
been given to them which reduced the country
to that defined by the Commission sent by
Sir Henry Barkly in the early part of the
year 1872. viz: On the East from the source
of the Umkamama River to its mouth - on
the North, from the source of the Umkamama
River, along the Ingeli Range, Nlaugeni
Range, Insiswa Range, down to the Umzim-
vubu Post, from thence to the Papana
Mountain, then on to the Gungululu Range
and Umkata Township from which town the
boundary line is the Umkata River to its
mouth, that being the Western boundary. - Such
was the boundary made by the Commission

and agreed to by me. —

This boundary has several times been broken and encroached upon by the Cape Government as for instance, the taking of the Rhode, — the Country occupied by the Amasesihi Tribe, and the mouth of the Umzimvubu River, called St John's by the Europeans — The Rhode has been returned but the two latter are still retained by Government. —

The Government base their claim to the St. John's River Mouth as having purchased it from a subordinate Chief called Nquiso who occupies the country situated on the Western bank of the Umzimvubu River, and who had no right whatever to sell any portion of the country occupied by him and his people, as he well knows, and has since expressed his sorrow for what he has done, which he says, he was tempted to do by the large sum that he was given. — No Chief or tribe can part with or sell any portion of Pondoland such being the privilege of the Paramount Chief alone, and that only with the advise and consent of his council. —

You will therefore perceive that the Cape Government have done a most unjust as well as an illegal act in this case as also in that of taking that part of Pondoland occupied by the Amaxesibi Tribe, - the Government assign as their reason for taking over these people and Country, that they complained they were oppressed and illused by the other Pondol Tribes - The same complaints were made as far back as 1870-71 when the Commission appointed by Sir Henry Barkly to define the boundary had instructions to inquire into their complaints, and ordered the Amaxesibis to recognise the sovereignty of the Paramount Chief of Pondoland his heirs and successors and to pay me a tribute of 20 head of Cattle which was done. -

In 1878 they again complained of oppression and applied to be taken over by the Cape Government - the Government then appointed a magistrate to that part of the

Country occupied by them and I believe ^{C169/1103} informed them (although no information was given to me at the time) that they were taken over by the Cape Government.

Matters since that time have grown yearly more serious constant affrays resulting in loss of life taking place between the Amaxesilis and border tribes, The Amaxesili - being protected and provided with arms and ammunition by the Government - have stolen more than they did previously to the Government Government taking them over and naturally the other Pondo tribes adjoining them have resented the thefts in force and in such numbers as to alarm the magistrates in East Griqualand who have at different times called out native and European forces.

Mr Sauer, Secretary Native Affairs, Cape Government, visited my country in the latter part of 1881 and had a meeting with me at which all my principal chiefs & councillors

were present, he then promised (on behalf of the Cape Government) (1) that all the grievances of which I complained would be redressed; (2) and that the country occupied by the Amasesilibis⁽³⁾ and St John's River Mouth would be returned. —

Shortly after this the Amasesilibis were ordered by the Government to leave my country and go to that lately occupied by the rebel Pondomise Chief and his people — this they refused to do — and in April of this year I was informed that a Commission had been appointed by the Govern^{mt} for the purpose of defining a boundary line between that portion of the country occupied by the Amasesilibis, and that occupied by the Pondo tribes, and I was requested to send representatives to meet this commission; — this I refused to do, giving as my reason — "that I did not consider the Gov^t were justified in taking any

"part of my country, and I further refused
"to recognise any commission appointed for
"that purpose." — the commissioners however
put up beacons marking a boundary which
has cut off a large tract of my country.
I have not received any notification of the
boundary they made, but am aware of it
from the beacons that they have put up.

The action of the Govt⁽¹⁾ in taking
over the Rhode and its people, ⁽²⁾ the
Amasesibi and the country occupied by them
³⁾ the purchase of the Umzimvubu River Mouth
has been a source of considerable irritation
to my people, and I have steadily and per-
sistently refused to recognise their rights
in doing so, and have all along strongly
protested against their action.

I consider that any complaints made
to the Govt⁽¹⁾ against me by my subjects
i.e. - Amasesibi - ought to have been investigated
by a commission appointed for that purpose -
I have no wish to exercise authority - if
distasteful to them - over the Amasesibi

not do I object to the Govern^t. taking them over, but I strongly object to the Govern^t taking part of my, already much curtailed, country with them.

The population of Pondoland has during the last 20 years nearly doubled itself and should it continue increasing at the same ratio, in a very few years the country as defined by the 1872 Commission will not be large enough for them —

The sole subsistence of my people, is the milk they get from their cattle & the corn they grow, it is therefore necessary that they should have sufficient land, for their cattle to graze upon and grow Corn! already the cattle (which have increased in proportion to the people) are dying from sickness, poverty, etc, owing to want of sufficient ground to graze on.

These grievances I wish fully represented to the Imperial Govern^t as also all the details

in connexion therewith, and for that purpose I wish to send a deputation to England, and have called upon my people to give cattle to defray the necessary expenses, but from several reasons, such, as the difficulty of getting cattle, owing to the amount of sickness amongst them this year and my inability to obtain cash for those now collected, as the traders will not buy for cash, giving as their reason that on account of the stagnation in the Colony cattle realize a very low price; -

I therefore with the advise of several white friends resident in my country - make an appeal to your Society, to assist me with funds for the purpose of sending the above mentioned deputation so that what I complain of will be properly represented.

I do not solicit as a gift, but as a loan, which I will repay as soon as I can collect sufficient cattle - but it is necessary owing to the unsettled state of my country that these grievances should be represented and

rectified, if possible, immediately, and
owing to the reasons I have already given
I cannot collect sufficient cattle, for
this purpose, in time to prevent, what
I much dread, viz, a rupture with the
Government. — I am quite willing to give
any security, your Society may deem
necessary, should the money I require be
advanced. —

I have as my father who reigned
before me always remained peaceable
and friendly to the whiteman, and altho'
often asked by other native tribes to join
with them in war against the Govern^t,
have either remained neutral or assisted
the Govern^t. — I am an Old Man now and
wish, if possible, to pass the remainder
of my days in peace — but it appears to
me — unless I can with your assistance
send a deputation immediately to
England to get my grievances redressed —

that I shall be forced by the Cape
Gov^t into war - I have now to exert
my authority to restrain my people, "who
are greatly irritated from hostilities and
I will continue to do my utmost to prevent
any collision between my people and
the Gov^t - no matter what further
aggressions the Cape Government may
commit - I will not sanction a
resort to arms, till all hopes of my
grievances being peaceably redressed, is
over - I make this appeal to your Society
as a last resource, and earnestly pray
that you may see your way open to render
me the assistance I ask for. -

I may mention in conclusion that I
have lost all hope of obtaining anything
by peaceable measures from the Cape
Government.

Witnesses to Umgwikela's mark

W. P. Bouverie

Abraham M. Nicholas

I have the honor to be
Gentlemen.

Your most ob^t servant

Umgwikela. ^{His} Mark

Paramount Chief of all Pondoland