

SUID _ AFRIKA

NATURELLE
EKONOMIESE KOMMISSIE

MONDELINGE GETUENIS: VOLUME 4, pp. 2061-2564

voor die

NATURELLE EKONOMIESE KOMMISSIE

Minutes of oral evidence before the
Native Economic Commission
Volume 4: 1930 Verulam, Port
Shepstone, Harding, Ixopo, Bulwer,
Estcourt, Ladysmith, Matatiele

199670

SUID - AFRIKA

EKONOMIESE KOMMISSIE
NATUURELLE

VERGADERINGSEKRETARIS: K. J. VAN DER MERWE

1964

VERGADERINGSEKRETARIS: K. J. VAN DER MERWE

INDEX .

VOL.4

VERULAM.....	2061-2079
PORT SHEPSTONE.....	2080-2114
HARDING.....	2115-2170
IXOPO.....	2171-2253
BULWER.....	2254-2287
ESTCOURT.....	2288-2328
LADYSMITH.....	2329-2449
LADYSMITH.....	2450-2523
MATATIELE.....	2524-2564

I N D E X.

MR. R.F. LAKE	pp. 2061 to 2068.
Town Clerk,			
NATIVE WITNESSES	" 2068 to 2079.

UNIV. VAN. ST. EXT. DIVISION
BIBLIOTHEK/LIBRARY.
S = DEC 1954
KLAAS / VAN BILLEN
REGISTR. Collection

5508

I N D E X

dp. 2081 to 2088.

... MR. R. F. LANE
Town Clerk.

" 2088 to 2092.

... NATIVE WITNESSES

UNIV. VAN S.A. EKST. AFDELING.
OF S.A. EXT. DIVISION.
BIBLIOTHEEK/LIBRARY.
2-DEC 1954
KLAS / CLASS / Van Biljen
REGISTR. collection

Mr. R. F. Lake.

NATIVE ECONOMIC COMMISSION.VERULAM, OCTOBER 3rd, 1930, 10 a.m.TWENTY-EIGHTH PUBLIC SITTING.PRESENT:

Dr. J. E. Holloway (Chairman),
 Major R. W. Anderson. Dr. A. W. Roberts.
 Mr. F. A. W. Lucas, K. C. Senator P. W. le Roux van Niekerk.
 Mr. A. M. Mostert. Dr. H. C. M. Fourie.
 Mr. C. Faye (Secretary).

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

MR. ROBERT FLETCHER LAKE, Town Clerk of Verulam, Called
and Examined.

THE CHAIRMAN: I understand that you wish to make a statement in accordance with our terms of reference? - Yes. I have a statement here. First of all, in regard to urban native areas: (1) Administration. Proclamation No. 551 of the 22nd March, 1924, under Section 21 of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act 1923 gave the Verulam Local Board (now the Verulam Town Board) exclusive rights to manufacture, sell and supply kaffir beer. Beyond the above Proclamation the Board has no specific power under the Natives (Urban Areas) Act for Native Administration.

(2) Adequacy. Nature of Housing and rentals charged. Sanitation. The need for a native location has not yet arisen. A Wesleyan Native Mission adjoins the township. Natives also own and occupy land at Grangetown, which also adjoins the township. Some of the natives, especially women, employed as domestic servants in the daytime live in either of the two areas above-mentioned. There has been no report of over-crowding in the four dwellings in Verulam occupied by natives. (See schedules 1 and 2 for particulars).

Sanitation is by the sanitary pail system. Pails are

removed by the Verulam Town Board twice weekly. The cost of this service is included in the General Rate of 1d. in the £ on valuation of immovable property.

Domestic servants who do not live in the surrounding district are housed in quarters on employers' premises. These natives either use latrines provided by their employers or use the public latrines, of which there are eight in various parts of the township. Native women invariably use latrines on their employer's premises.

(3) Recreation. There is no recreation provided by the Town Board for local natives. Neither has the need arisen. At the native mission there are occasional native concerts. When off duty natives usually visit their friends in the surrounding areas.

(4) Industrial and other diseases and provision for their treatment. Employers provide medical attention and medicine for their native servants. There are two local practitioners. A combined Indian and native hospital is being experimented with for six months by the Provincial Administration. The last case of infectious disease in natives notified was on the 25th March, 1925, a native in employer's barracks. Typhoid fever. Isolated and treated privately.

M.O.H. reports:- Health very satisfactory. Cases coming under observation in adults - bronchitis and intestinal. In children: mostly enteritis, mainly due to indiscretion of parents feeding at breast and then the use of some artificial food, which may be unnecessary and given in dirty bottles.

Venereal: Very few cases of this disease come under observation in the Township itself.

(5) Liquor: The Verulam Town Board has the sole right to manufacture, sell and supply kaffir beer at its native beer

hall. The sale is now principally to the travelling native public. Income for the corporate year ended the 30th June last was £1252. Surplus on the year's working £362. During the last two or three years the sales of beer have decreased, partly owing to the private brewing of beer in the township and on the borders of the township.

The Native Revenue Superintendent reports that malaria and inclement weather have also conducted to the falling off.

(6) Mortality among adults and children: The M.O.H. reports one death only recorded. A male adult aged 60. Death due to heart failure and dilated heart. No death during year.

(8) NATIVE LABOUR: (1) General labour conditions, I believe, are being supplied by large employers in the district. (2) Wages, etc: I can only speak of domestic servants included in (3) Domestic male and female servants. Advantages and disadvantages of employment of: The supply of domestic labour varies. It is somewhat difficult to obtain native male domestic servants who speak Dutch or English. Native female domestic servants almost invariably speak English. All native domestic servants can speak the "kitchen kaffir" and persons who know either Zulu or "kitchen kaffir" have little difficulty with their native domestic servants. As a rule the native domestic servant is honest, respectful and hard-working. The last continues until he needs a "rest", when usually he will find his employer another native equally reliable until he is ready to return to his work, when the substitute leaves without friction.

The above refers to the staple resident. Newcomers, especially those who do not understand natives and who are not known locally, sometimes have a difficulty in obtaining

suitable native domestic servants.

Advances of wages and effects: Only in one case over 24 years have I lost money from an advance of wages to a domestic servant. Generally my experience is that one can safely advance him money. Unless he thinks he is being treated unfairly there is no diminution in the amount or quality of the work given after the advance.

Wages and General. Given healthy quarters and occasional warm water for bathing, if the native is encouraged to eat a proportion of anti-scorbutic food he does not tire easily and will work in some cases considerably over a year before the craving for his "kraal" comes to him.

Wages for a good domestic native who can do very plain cooking vary from £2 to £3 per calendar month, plus quarters, rations, kitchen clothing and medical attention. Wages now have an upward tendency.

The female domestic native who can wash and iron usually gets 35/- per calendar month, plus the coarser food from the table, but neither quarters nor clothing.

The only other domestic servant available locally is the Indian, about whom I have had little experience. Where I experimented with an Indian garden and workshop hand for some months I reverted back to the a native.

The modern native can be trained to garden work equally to an Indian and if he is trained to know that he is relied on will appreciate that reliance by good service. There are woeful exceptions but, luckily, few. They seek other employment. A native as a rule tries to be fair and expects justice and fair treatment from his employer. Generally the native domestic servant who has worked for some time in a large town such as

Durban does not appear so trustworthy as one from the country.

15. Legislation. (8) The Natives (Urban Areas) Act is the only Native Legislation that directly affects the Verulam Town Board, and then only that portion dealing with liquor, etc.

Population of Verulam is estimated at: Europeans 233, natives 178, Indians etc. 1030, Total: 1441.

THE CHAIRMAN: How are the profits of the native beer canteen used ?- At present they are used for putting up new premises. The present premises are hired from an Indian, which is considered unsatisfactory. The new premises for a new native beer hall will include latrines and other necessities. The question of a hostel has been raised and will be further considered.

Do you think that that will absorb all the accumulated profits ?- A little over £2,000 will be spent, and that will leave us a surplus for contingencies of roughly £900.

Is there simply going to be a beer hall and nothing else for that money ?- Also native quarters.

DR. ROBERTS: What do you mean by native quarters ?- Quarters for the natives working in the native beer hall.

SENATOR LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: Are you putting those up now ?- The plans are out and the quarters are included in the plans.

THE CHAIRMAN: How far is Grangetown from here ?- On the west of the township, directly abutting the township.

Do the natives have individual title there ?- Many of them have.

Freehold ?- Yes. I had a native servant and I held his title deeds for him for some time.

How do the white inhabitants view the granting of freehold title to natives in an adjoining township ?- I think they view it with indifference. The question is so very small here.

Have you any idea how many natives hold freehold there ?- I could not tell you, roughly I should think about twenty, but I am not speaking from any records; I am only guessing.

What size are the holdings ?- Usually about half an acre, or a little more.

Nothing bigger than that ?- There are some of two acres, but not more than that.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Can a native continue to purchase there ?- I think so. I have not heard of any cases where they have been stopped from purchasing.

You mentioned the wages generally as being from £2 to £2 23. Is there any difference according to the class of occupation, for instance between store boys and domestic servants ?- I do not know what a store-boy gets. I am speaking solely of domestic servants. It would depend largely on a boy's ability and of course also on his age.

MR. LUCAS: What do your own natives get ?- We have got only one on the pipe-line, and he is only a part-time employee.

THE CHAIRMAN: And on sanitation ?- They have all Indians on sanitation; the natives will not perform that work.

DR. ROBERTS: What portion of the beer fund do you think that you could give to help this hospital ?- About £1,000 is spoken of.

As a lump sum, or in perpetuity ?- It would be rather difficult to say. The beer taken during last year went down rather much, but it is quite possible, if the takings keep up, that the Board could give say £100 or £200 per year. They would be able to give that, I should think.

You have £500 ?- There would be about £1,000 when the new beer hall is erected --- there will be £900 or £1000 surplus.

Do you think you can give £1,000 ?- The Board thought of doing so. As a matter of fact, the Board applied to the Minister of Native Affairs, and there was a difficulty in that natives from all over the district would be provided there with native hospital accommodation. The Board was quite prepared that the money should be given towards it.

That is about £100 or £200 per year ?- They probably can do more, if necessary.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Nowx this hospital is purely native and Indian x?- Yes, at present it is.

Is it much patronised ?- It seems to me that it is rather difficult to expect much success. It is run now by the Indian Immigration Bureau, and during the time the ~~financial~~ Provincial Administration was experimenting with the hospital all Indians under the control of the Indian Immigration Bureau were sent to Durban and not to that hospital.

DR. ROBERTS: But now you are going to convert it into a regular hospital for natives and Indians ?- No, unfortunately not. The Provincial Administration are closing it down at the end of the month. The Board would have liked to have seen it kept open.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Is it necessary to have a hospital here seeing that you are only seventeen miles from Durban ?- Yes, it appears very necessary to have something of the sort here.

You appear to be a very healthy township here ?- Of course, we have not got many resident natives here.

You draw from the whole of the reserve ?- Yes. They would come in if the hospital were run permanently. They would be coming in from all round the district.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Is it a satisfactory building ?- The building is all right; quite a nice building, very airy.

The revenue from the beer hall, is that all derived entirely from Verulam natives ?- No, principally from travelling natives.

DR. ROBERTS: You are going to train nurses, are you not ?- That is in view ?- I do not think it has been considered. It was requested that the Board should give £1,000 towards the hospital, as a contribution towards the expenses undertaken by the Provincial Administration.

MR. MOSTERT: Was it suggested that it should be used as a training ground for nurses ?- I do not think so.

CHIEF LUZULANE, CALLED AND EXAMINED:

CHIEF GIBIZWE NDLOVU, " " "
(Chief of the Ndwedwe District).

THE CHAIRMAN: We shall be pleased to hear what you have to say ?- (CHIEF LUZULANE): We natives of the Verulam magisterial district are living under hard conditions, because we have no land of our own. We are all living on farms, and we wonder whether the Government would do something to make these hard conditions easier for us. We are law-abiding. Whatever the Government requires us to do, even to the paying of taxes under many handicaps, we carry out the Government's wishes to the best of our ability. Many of us are like the wanderers, we are homeless and we have no land, and it is a matter of

surprise to us that although we are law-abiding the Government seems to do nothing to better our lot in this district.

If a mother were to throw away her newly-born child I wonder whether soon afterwards she would repent of what she had done and follow it up and go and look for it. I say that because the Government has abandoned us, and disregarded us, and has not taken any interest in our lot, we are here to ask you to see whether something cannot be done for us. The Government follows us up and demands taxes from us. Our principal point to-day is not that we want say £20 for each grown-up male as wages per month, because even if we were to be so fortunate as to get such a princely income, where could we enjoy it? We have no land. The principal complaint which we have to bring to your notice and which we have to represent on behalf of our people is that we should be given more land. Another thing which makes it difficult for us to understand the Government's attitude is that the authorities have laid down by law that a native cannot buy land from the European.

Another thing we do not understand is that the Government has prohibited a native from borrowing money from a European in excess of £2. All these are grievances with us, but these are the conditions under which we have to live. We do not understand why the Government should impose this kind of life upon us, because after all we are the children of the Government.

Furthermore, we are not allowed to hire land from white people on account of the laws of the Government. We find it difficult to understand why the Government should do this to

us, seeing that we try to live at peace with people, and as decent people, and that we try to carry out the laws which the Government has made.

We cannot speak much about the hardships which natives have to put up with in regard to stock, because here in this district, living as we do on farms, we have practically no stock, or very little stock indeed. So I shall say nothing about that. We are not an indolent people and we would plead with the Government, through you, to set aside land for us in this district, where we might go and find refuge. There we could live and make our lives more possible than what they are today as tenants.

In the mission reserves there is no land worth speaking of to which our people could ever go. And everywhere the land is being divided up for cultivation for the planting of cane. And the same applies to the mission station of the Roman Catholics in this district. We have to pay 3d. per head per week for the dipping of our stock, which means 12/- per year. Then we have to pay £1 per head for each adult male. We would have been in a better position had we been able to develop and we would have been able to give you better evidence today if we had been in a position to put our views before you through the representative head of our people. (NOTE: By Mr. FAYE(who acted as interpreter): I asked him whom he meant and after some hesitation he said "Solomon". Either through Chief Solomon or through Chief Ntyingwa Wabe).

The grievance which we have to bring to your notice about police making night raids on our homes is a serious one. In the middle of the night the police will knock at the door

and they will come in on the pretext that they are looking for beer. I call it a pretext because it is quite unnecessary for them to do so. When a man has retired for the night with his family it is a very disagreeable thing for him to be disturbed.

We also protest against the prohibition by the Government of the sale of dagga when money is so scarce among us natives. In the olden days with us the smoking of dagga was a national custom, but it was confined to mature men. Youths were on no account allowed to smoke it, and if they were found out smoking it they were given a good thrashing. We protest strongly against any interference with the present method of lobolo, and we say that ^{the} consideration should be cattle and not money.

Now, I want to mention my experience to the Commission in regard to land. I wanted to buy some land from Mr. William Campbell, of the Natal Estates, and Mr. Campbell was agreeable to sell it to me. The land is at a place named Ntuzuma. So far as the parties to the transaction were concerned, everything was in order, but the Department of Native Affairs refused to give its sanction. That has left the matter now so that there is no hope of our getting any land in this district. The Government will not help us to get land and it is impossible for us to help ourselves.

The British fought against the Germans and we heard that many nations of the world went to the assistance of the British, and at last the war ended. The British went home to rest and so did the people of the other nations, but there is still one people fighting against the Germans. Who are

those people? Those people who are still fighting against the Germans are ourselves. We You came back here after going overseas to live, and you live upon us. We have to render the labour and we have to support you with our work. You get the profits, and all that we get is the knowledge that we are battling for you and the King, in keeping you living.

We would like the Commission to use its influence with the Department of Native Affairs to prevent natives from any farming districts who live on farms as tenants of the white owners without the knowledge of their local chief. People come and settle on farms in an area over which a chief exercises personal jurisdiction. But the chief knows nothing about the arrival of any newcomer. Sometimes persons who are married will come along with their families and we should like the local chief to be informed so that he may know what the position is. Instructions to that effect should be given.

Then we would ask that in the case of natives getting loans from white people a document should be signed in each instance before the Local Native Commissioner. Natives who are at work we feel should have access more readily than they have at present to their employers. Persons who employ large numbers of natives are difficult to approach, owing to the number of people who stand between them and the workers. This often leads to misunderstanding and ill-feeling. We think the relations between you white people and ourselves on private lands and on farms would be improved were we to have freer access to those who are highest in authority over us wherever we may happen to be.

The Government through its officers is constantly ap-

proaching us chiefs in regard to tax defaulters, but we are not given a very fair opportunity of dealing with this matter, because the authorities will issue instructions that taxes have to be paid at such and such a centre and at such and such a place. The chief is not always aware of what is done, and accordingly is not present. This means that when defaulters are looked for the chief is under the impression that taxes have been paid at certain centres and that the people have disposed of their liabilities; and then the chief suddenly finds that that is not so. That, Sir, is a very irritating thing.

We would like to see the ward system introduced on private lands, and we would like inter-tribal boundaries to be laid down.

CHIEF GIBIZWE NDLOVU: We want to know who it is who has complained to the Government about the number of cattle which we have in the location and who has said that we must decrease our number.

(NOTE BY MAGISTRATE: I put the question to him the other day and explained to him that the points which they should discuss were in respect of the reduction of cattle in the locations. I made it perfectly clear to him that this was only a matter for discussion. I raised the question of overstocking with him).

CHIEF GIBIZWE NDLOVU (continues): We are very much opposed to individual land tenure in the native locations, in the same way as land is held in the Transkei, where the capital is Umtata, which means "Take him away". If we are allowed to continue occupying the land communally, as we do now, we shall be perfectly satisfied. We do not want the

Umtata law, which makes the people fall under the government of local councils, and we prefer to be governed and ruled as at present.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do not you think it is bad for your people to borrow too much money from their employers ?- (Chief Luzulane): I think it would not be risky, because a person borrowing money knows what he is about and will work for it until he pays it. I have done the same. I borrowed £50, and on another occasion £60 from a white man, and I repaid it.

Do you think there should be any limit to which an employee is allowed to borrow from his employer ?- Yes, Sir.

How much ?- £10. That would be better than the present system.

Do instances occur in this district where they lobolo with both money and cattle ?- On account of the economic conditions in this district lobolo is sometimes paid in money alone, sometimes in money and cattle, but at other times in cattle.

Which is the most common form here ?- To me it seems that nowadays lobolo in this district is paid more in money than in cattle.

Do the women here give the baby the breast on the day it is born ?- We let the baby sleep one night, and then we allow it to have the breast. That was in the past, but nowadays I see that the child is given the breast on the day of its birth.

Do you know why they let it sleep one day before it is given the breast ?- That is part of the ritual connected with the coming into the world of a baby. One of the formalities which had to be gone through was that a child had to be

fortified through the use of certain parts of wild animals. These parts had to be burnt and the smoke had to pass along the child, and after that the child could be given the breast.

Was not the child given any food the first day ?- No, the first day the child would not be given any food at all, and the babies of those days were much lustier and more vigorous than those of today. They did not die so much.

Was it only the first day that they were not given the breast ?- So far as I can remember in my young days a child was made to rest one day only before being given the breast.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: When did the child first get its natural food - ordinary food from the breast ?- The baby was given food after a week -- that is, food other than its mother's milk. That would also be the occasion when the cord of the child would be perforated and that would be the day on which the male relatives of the child would be allowed to see it for the first time. The food was "incumbane". That was the first food other than the mother's milk which was given to the child, and as the child got stronger so the food would be made stronger.

MR. LUCAS: On what terms do you live on the lands on the farm where you are ?- Fortunately I myself am not living on a farm belonging to a European, but on a tiny piece of land belonging to the Government.

On what terms do you hold this Government land ?- I came here to the magistrate and I pleaded for help, because I had nowhere to live, and the magistrate said "Why do not you go across to the Government land there and hide there, hide away from the farm", and I did.

Do your people live on ordinary farmer's terms ?- Our people on the farms in this district are labour tenants.

Are they allowed land to plough and to graze their cattle on, and are they paid ?- In some instances a small piece of grazing land is given to the tenant farmers, but in others they get none at all. The pay is very small, and a little land is given them for gardens.

What pay do they get ?- The average is usually £2.10.0. per month.

And how many months do they have to work ?- At first we were told that the term was to be for six months in the year, but now the people have to work throughout the whole of the year.

Does each man who works get £2.10.0. per month, or is it just the head of the kraal who gets that ?- No, each person gets that; that is the average.

That £2.10.0, is that for a month, or is that for thirty working days ?- That is thirty days, a month of thirty days, as recorded on their labour tickets.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Do I understand you correctly to say that you have to work the whole year round and that you are paid £2.10.0. per month ?- There is no legal obligation on them to work longer than six months, but in some instances a good deal of pressure is brought to bear to go on working until the year is finished. But there are some of course who do not work right through the year.

MR. LUCAS: Do the women go out to work, any of the women ?- They do not have to work, but they go of their own free will.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: You said you wanted more land. For

whom do you want it, do you want it for every native who has no land ?- My plea is on behalf of the landless natives, including myself and my people.

Are you aware that there are thousands of white people too who have no land at all ?- Yes, I know that, but there is one white man near us who has as many as ten farms all by himself.

What is your idea, should that farm be cut up and should the land be given to the white people who have no land and also to the natives who have no land ?- No, I do not think that the white people should be considered, because they have houses here in town and on the beach in Durban.

It should only be given to the natives then ?- Yes, Sir, because the land was ours at first, and we are landless now, and we are accustomed to having land.

Did I understand you correctly to say that there should be no money used for lobolo, but only cattle ?- I say this, that here on the farms owing to economic conditions we have been driven to using other means for lobolo than cattle.

You said that the Government should allow you to sell dagga ?- Yes.

You are an old man and you have seen many changes that have taken place. Now, would it not be a dangerous thing if the sale of dagga were to be allowed all over the country where the fathers are away from the boys, and so on ?- Yes, Sir, but my plea was rather on behalf of the dagga addicts, the older people. It is cruel to hold that back from them.

Do you think it is a good thing for the natives to smoke dagga ?- Yes, Sir; the dagga-smoker is a better man than the non-smoker. Supposing a buck were suddenly to

spring out and appear here. I can tell you that the man who smokes dagga would see it and get it before the man who does not smoke.

Is dagga smoking a natural habit of the old Zulus ?- There were some who did not take it, but others did and they used to put a good deal of water inside a bowl, and they used to be very happy, and everything had a very pleasant appearance in the countryside. One felt much happier when one smoked dagga.

MR. LUCAS: Do the kraal heads choose for the girl whom she shall marry, or does the girl choose herself? Must the girl marry the man whom the father chooses ?- The girls marry whom they choose. There is no compulsion in marriage nowadays.

Is that new for your people ?- Yes, you brought it.

Are there any other changes in the habits of the women, any changes which have come about in recent years ?- Another change is that girls become mothers without being married, and without lobolo having passed.

Do the women object nowadays to doing the work which they used to do in the past, or do they still do the same work for their own men ?- No, we help our wives now in a variety of ways where we did not do so in the past.

Do the wives claim that you should help them ?- Yes.

And do the wives claim that they should not do more work nowadays ?- Well, my own experience is that the more you give a woman the more she expects you to do for her.

THE CHAIRMAN: I want to ask Chief Ndlovu a few questions. Is your location overstocked ?- (CHIEF NDLOVU):No.

our area is not over-stocked.

You can put more cattle on ?- We had more cattle on our lands before the rinderpest than we have now. Rinderpest cleared all our cattle off.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Are there any more people in your reserve now than there used to be in the olden days, or are there less ?- I am not able to say; I do not know.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Can you tell us why you are against the council system? Are you afraid that it will undermine the power of the chiefs ?- No; we say this, - we say that we have more confidence in the rule of the white man than we have in the rule of a council of educated natives.

Is that why you object to it ?- Yes, we prefer to stay and go on as we are doing today.

THE COMMISSION ROSE AT 12.5 p.m., AND SUBSEQUENTLY PROCEEDED TO DURBAN, LEAVING FOR PORT SHEPSTONE ON MONDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 6th, 1930, EVIDENCE BEING TAKEN AT PORT SHEPSTONE AT 9.30 a.m., ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7th, 1930.
