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NATIVE ECONOMIC COMMISSION

FORT ST. JOHNS 10th NOVEMBER 1930 9.30 a.m.

FORTYFIFTH PUBLIC SITTING

PRESENT:

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

Mr. C. Faye (Secretary)

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Mr. BENJAMIN SIPOSO NGABENE called and examined:

CHAIRMAN: I understand that there are certain
definite points on which you desire to give evidence?—Yes,
there are. First of all I am going to talk about the
question of detribalisation of Natives and matters affecting
the tribes. Detribalisation, to my mind, is the result of
the fact that Natives have been losing their traditions.
That has been one of the causes not only of detribalisation,
but also of the control of the chief dwindling. Chiefs
who have been ruling them in the olden days, have gradually
been losing their power of control. In addition to that,
the Native people are oppressed by the burden of taxation.
Their requirements in the way of clothing and such things
has always been increasing, ever since the civilization of
the white man has come in, and these things have lead to the
Natives leaving their homes in the search of employment, so
that they might earn the money wherewith to meet their
requirements. A Native will go away in search of money,
and he finds that he is able to make enough money to meet
his needs. Gradually, he gets out of the way of living
according to Native customs and he begins to live according
to European fashions. He finds it is a good thing to be
employed in the town or in a labour centre, because he gets
Mr. Matabane

money to buy food with and also to buy clothing, and the result is that he remains there and does not come back. There he meets other people coming from different places, from other tribes, and those people from different parts of the country remain there altogether and, in the end, you will find very often that a man does not even know what nation or what tribe he originally came from.

He continues to live among the white people and he loses all knowledge of the traditions of his own people. He works away from his own people and from his own home and others from his own home also go away to work in the towns. That is the cause of what you can detribalisation.

Now, I come to lobolo. A woman is a valuable asset with us. A man goes to work and he bring back money to buy cattle with. A beast is an animal which contains blood, and blood is a very valuable thing. If a Native wants to speak to his ancestors, he does it through the channel of a beast, and a beast which contains blood is given to the father of the girl, and the father of the girl in return gives this man his own daughter to wed. The father of the girl sticks to the cattle. These cattle which are paid for the girl and have bought the girl, are merely a security for the girl, so that she shall be well treated at the new kraal of her husband, and in that way the husband of the girl will also be looked up to and valued by the girl's father.

The children of that girl will inherit from the father of the girl's kraal, but if no lobolo is paid, the children will not inherit from the girl's people and a man who has not paid lobolo will not inherit from the girl's people, and he will not be valued by the girl herself.

If a girl is got without dowry, she will not be valued, not even by her own people, because, as we say, no blood has passed between the two tribes.
I now come to agriculture. The ploughing in these parts has been well advanced since the Native Council saw its way to get demonstrators for us. We have no shortage of mealies nowadays, nor is there any starvation such as we had in the past. We now want to ask the General Council to increase the number of these demonstrations, say, from three to four in one district. We have seen, and it has been proved that people do desire to improve the ploughing of their grounds. The Natives who work for the farmers, learn improved methods of tilling the soil and when they come back to their own areas, they know these improved methods and they apply them.

That shows that they realise the advantages of better methods.

In regard to agricultural schools, we should be glad if it could be arranged to have Native assistants appointed to help the European lecturers. My idea in saying that is, these people, who have been taught agriculture, would be able to express things properly to the Natives in their own language.

The number of Natives on the lands in increasing every day, but the amount of arrable land that the Natives have at their disposal is becoming less and less. In these areas, there are tracts of land which have been included in the demarcated forest areas. Now, I want to say this about them. Even the Forest Department are not using those strips of land. When a Government forest is demarcated, beacons are set down indicating the area of land that is to be a forest reserve. Well, large strips of ground which are not used for forest purposes are lying in between these beacons, generally very close to the beacons. There are no forests there and these strips of ground are not being used.

We want to use these lands, particularly as the
Mr. Ndabene

Forest Department is not using these bits of land.

MR. LUCAS: Do you mean that the Forest Department have included more land for their forest reserves than they really need? - Yes, that is so.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Are you referring to natural forests? - I am referring to demarcated Government forests.

With regard to the rural areas, I see a lot that is necessary going on in this country. There is a lot of mortality among children and adults. The first result of that is this. Here is a woman who is pregnant. She does not quite know how to treat herself when she is in that condition, nor does she know how to treat herself when the time comes for the child to be born. She may be by herself at that time, just like a wild beast in a field, and there is no one there to help her or assist her. The child is born, but neither she nor the infant are properly looked after. Even after the child is born, that woman is not looked after. She has not got a comfortable place to sleep in and the child is not properly attended to, and the result is that the health of that woman, as well as that of the baby, is very much impaired.

Then the child grows up and, in the course of time, that woman becomes pregnant again and she has another child. The first child is ailing and sick and the mother is still weak when she conceived the other child. The first child is growing up but, while the woman is waiting for the second child, she has not recovered her good health. All that is due to the fact that we have not got midwives in these parts. We want our pregnant women to be shown how they should look after themselves and their babies.

I say that the number of women at the time of childbirth who are in a very bad state of health, is increasing. The result is that the children are weak and puny. An
ordinary fever comes along and the children just die off. That is a matter on which we feel something could be done.

Now, with regard to cattle, I want to point out that there are people supervisors looking after the interests of the cattle and seeing that they are in good health and are properly treated when they are sick. But does it not follow that we, as a people, should also look after the health of our women, does it not follow that we should have people looking after the health of the nation. Even the huts, which the Native people live in, are not what one would like them to be. They are not hygienic and one feels that it is not wise for a woman to give birth to a child in huts of that kind.

If there were nurses to look after these women and teach them how to look after themselves and their babies, things would be very much better. A nurse would see to it that a newly born child was properly and rightly fed. If you were to go to the location today and if you were to look around there, you would be surprised to see how children, even of seven months of age, are allowed to eat cooked mealies and eat nearly everything.

With regard to Native labour, I want to say that we people in the Native locations are on the losing side, because our young men are not working for us today. But young men go to the labour centres. We say "Very well, let them go, they will bring money for us," but they do not do so. Whatever money they earn, they spend on themselves. They have to spend their money to meet their own requirements although their people at home may be starving. We find, therefore, that we have lost their labour here at their homes and we have also lost their earnings. It is true that this money is paid to our people working up there, but there are a lot of temptations thrown in their way. All sorts of
things are shewn to them in the shops and they buy these things and spend their money.

I want to put this forward on behalf of the Native, that the Natives who go to work in the labour centres should not be allowed to stay there for longer than twelve months and that they should have their pay deferred for the last three or four months of the time at these centres, and at the end of these twelve months, these men should be compelled to return to their homes. Their wages for the last three or four months should, naturally, go to their homes.

The result of this would be that they would not be using up all the money they earned while they were away. We should then get their wages for at least four months, but the great thing is that the boy would be forced to return to his home and we would get him back. And, if he comes back, he will have the pleasure of seeing his wife. It happens very often here that there are adultery cases caused by the husband going away and staying away for three and four years.

We have a lot of complaints from the women whose husbands are on the mines and will not come back. Even today, I think there are three or four women outside this court who have come to the Magistrate with such complaints. They want their husbands to be repatriated and to be returned to them. It happens sometimes that a person wants to return home, but he has not got enough money to pay his railway fare, nor has he enough money to pay for his food on the way home. That is one of the reasons why I say that the wages should be deferred for three or four months, and these men would then have enough money to help them to get back.

My suggestion is, that these men should not be contracted for more than a year and at the end of the year they should be compelled to return home.
MR. GQOLO JICO called and examined:

CHAIRMAN: Are there any points which you wish to place before the Commission? — Yes, sir. I am thankful to our Magistrate for having called us so that we may have the pleasure of seeing you great chiefs here. And we are also glad of having the opportunity of placing our views and our complaints before you.

Our families in the country today are looking after themselves. With regard to our chief, the Magistrate, we get on very well with him and he helps us quite a lot, but we find that we have many cases where our people have gone to work elsewhere and we also find that many of the wives of the men have gone to work elsewhere, and while they are away, these women misconduct themselves with other men.
Their husbands have gone to the labour centres and, when the husbands return, they find that their wives have gone away from the kraals. It is generally the young men who are away, and when they come back their wives have gone too.

In the olden days our women were not allowed to go to beer drinks and such things, when they still had young children. Women who had just been married were not allowed to go to such festivities until such time when she had at least four children born to her. But today you find women are going in a different way. The husbands of these women are away at the mines and they will not send money to support their families. When the husbands come back, these women refuse to receive them and the result is that the lobolo cattle has to be returned. These women have gone back to their father's kraals and they have become pregnant there and this results in the lobolo cattle having to be returned and the marriage being dissolved.

We used to plough and plant our grounds nicely because, in the olden days, our young men did not
run away to beer drinks, but today they all run away to such places where they drink and all the money which they have earned and have brought back with them is used up in drink. We used to look after our cattle well, and if the cattle trespassed on other people's lands, we used to chastise the boys. In those days there was no danger of cattle being taken to the pound. Nowadays things are different and we cannot very well chastise the boys when the cattle do trespass because the child, even though he is very small, runs away to the labour centres and we do not see him again. This is one of the causes why so many of the Natives become paupers, because we have no one to look after our stock.

With regard to agriculture, we used to apply to the chief for lands and the chief or the headman would refer to the people in the locality and would say "Is there any arable land available which can be given to this man", and the people in the locality would say, "Yes, there is arable ground and grazing land available", and the man would get it and there was no friction then among the people.

Today, again, things are different, and conditions have been spoiled through people entering the location and settling down without first consulting the people already in the location. In those days, when people in the locality were consulted in regard to arable land, things were always arranged nicely and there was no need for anyone to go to the Magistrate and complain, but today there are lots of complaints and we say that people in a locality should first be consulted before any land is taken up. We say that, the more so because the land for grazing and for ploughing is getting less and less, although the number of people is increasing.

Although we are getting the greatest assistance from the demonstrators and we are ploughing on progressive
Mr. Jico

lines, our grounds are getting less and less.

There was a remark made by the last speaker, who is also a chief, with which I quite agree. That is in regard to the nursing of our children. Young women go to the beer drinks and they remain there and there is none to nurse the children at home.

We have coloured people living among us here today and they want ground too, but we have no grounds for them, as there is not enough. There is a great deal of congestion today in the locations. There are no sources from which we can get money. Wool is of no value and we have no market for our tobacco, no market for our mealies and no market for the cattle. On the other hand, the taxes imposed upon us are more than we can pay. When we go to the labour centres we find that our sons go away from us. We say that the father should know where his sons are going and, in this respect, I agree that the system of deferred pay should be introduced. But I go further, I say that the amount of the deferred pay should be known to the fathers so that the money which our sons make may be utilised in these parts.

Our sons go to the labour centres and leave their education behind them. They told us at first that they were going to work for us at the labour centres, but they do not do so. The young men leave their young wives, whom they have just married, behind. When a man is on the mines the woman never gets the money earned by the husband, nor does the father nor the mother.

When the man went to the mines, he went there to these unmarried women and he lived with them. Today we are progressing, but in that respect we are going backwards.
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I want to say something more about agriculture. In the olden days we used a wooden hoe, and I have made you a sample of one to show you here (wooden hoe produced in court). First of all the one side was used, and then the other side. That was before we had this up-to-date kind of hoe.

DR. ROBERTS: Do you know the days when those wooden implements were used?—Yes, when I was born they were still using those wooden hoes, I used to see them using it.

How old are you?—In the Galeka War of 1877 I was a young man, I was just married.

(Witness must have been close on 70 years of age)

Mr. Fremantle Soxujwa called and examined.

CHAIRMAN: You want to place certain views before us?—Yes. I am a preacher of the Wesleyan Church and I want to say that the great necessity for money resulting from contact with the European people and the increase of taxation and other things, compel the Native to go and earn money and go to places where they can obtain work. When the Natives are at these centres, some of them become destribalised and they will not return to their homes. There is a desire for freedom and independence among them and it has the effect of these people doing mischief, which, if they were at their own homes, they would not be doing.

When these people are in the labour centres, they use and spend their money for their own purposes and their earnings are of no help or assistance to their own tribes. Furthermore, the dislike of the chastisement which is meted out to them among their own people, makes them go away. They break away from their old customs and traditions
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and the result is that their own families have no respect for them.

These people rush their hearts to the rocks and it is their actions which have caused certain laws to be passed against the Natives.

Detribalisation, however, is of benefit to certain people. They pick up the English or Afrikaans languages without ever having gone to school to learn it, and they have opportunities of learning things when they are fairly old, opportunities which they would not otherwise have had. They have the opportunity of doing some mechanical work and industrial work, without having gone to schools or to colleges, and, as a result of their skill at this work, they earn high wages although they were never at school. Nevertheless, their way of living is pitiful. They spend all their money and they leave nothing. They save nothing for a rainy day.

I think it would be well if the Government were to see its way to provide for a better way of living for these people, a way similar to that in which they live at their own homes in their own tribes. It would be a good thing if they could be brought under some kind of control as they are at their own homes.

In regard to tribal conditions, one of the advantages of such conditions is that we are under the direct control of our national chief. We have certain rights given to us by the Government in the controlling of our own affairs. One of the bad things is the endless drinking of kaffir beer that is going on. Another bad thing is superstition. Another thing which is keeping back the progress of the country is polygamy. This has the result that a Native does not increase his earnings and does not become a useful member of the community. One of the effects of this polygamy is, that a Native acquires
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as many cattle as he possibly can so as to be able to pay dowry for as many wives as he can get. Even if he only earns threepence, his big idea is to get cattle so as he may buy wives. He marries these wives and one of them may have many children. But the father is unable to support all these children that he has brought into the world, because he has no sources from which to derive money. He cannot provide for their requirements. And that, sir, leads to an increasing poverty of the nation as a whole.

Another disadvantage of tribal conditions is the lack of education in the Native location. Schools which have been established years ago, do not show any progress at all, and, as a matter of fact, many Natives are not at all interested in the education of their children.

These are all things which tend to put the Native back, because of the fact that they fail to see that progress can only be achieved by education.

Another point which is keeping us back is the failure of the Native to work daily. Although there are many things which place the Native in an awkward position he does not try to meet his difficulties or to cope with them. For instance, tax time comes. He does not worry his head about it, he does not make any provisions for it, he just carries on gaily as if he did not know at all that such a time had to come and the tax had to be paid. He has not made any preparations to meet the payment of this tax. The Native is reckless. Instead of preparing beforehand for the payment of the tax, he does not bother his head until the collector of taxes is at his door. He lacks knowledge to prepare for things of that kind. It is our desire the Government should help and assist the Native people and we want the Government to be sympathetic towards the Native people, especially as regards the points I have mentioned.
The Government is helping the Native in trying to overcome these obstacles. Civilization and christianity are also helping the Native to advance.

In regard to lobolo, some people seem to think that lobolo is a custom among the Natives of selling their daughters. That is not so. The state of civilization in which the Natives are now is such that it would be inadvisable to do away with lobolo today, because, in the first place, it is evidence of the Native marriage. It is by the payment of that dowry that it is proved that a girl has been properly married, that she is a woman who has a right to her husband's things. It is a security for the woman, so that, should the husband become pauperised, she shall be able to get assistance for his children and for herself. It is proof that the Native man is prepared to give something for his wife and, on the other hand, it is proof on the side of the father, that he values his daughter. It is an encouragement for the young man, it is an inducement for him to go and work, so as to earn money. A man who wants to have a wife, knows that he must go and work for her. Moreover, the Native woman wants this dowry to be paid, because, by the payment of that dowry, she knows that she will be looked upon as a woman of dignity. It shows her her worth. Then, furthermore, the dowry paid is returned for the outfit given to the girl.

There may be some defects in regard to this custom, I do not deny that there are not. There is nothing that has not got its weak points, but if there are such defects in the lobolo custom, it would be well that we should try and remedy those defects, rather than do away with the custom. I do not think that the lobolo custom is as bad or as wicked as some people want to make out that it is. Sometimes, if there are no cattle to be paid as dowry, sheep, money or goats are substituted, or any other article which the Native happens
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to possess. It need not necessarily be cattle.

MR. LUCAS: What are these defects which you wish to be remedied? - I said that it is possible that there may be defects, but personally I do not see any.

I now want to deal with the question of the landless Native population. If I follow the heading in your agenda, I find that, in the Native locations, there are people who have not got land, and who are finding it very difficult, if not impossible, to make a living in the locations.

These people, as a result, trek all over the country, they go from place to place trying to make a living. I am afraid that they are increasing in numbers and they work and live among the European people today. These are the detribalised people and, as a result of there being such people, there is no room for those other people who come from the reserves to look for work.

There are so many of these detribalised Natives, that the others cannot find anything to do, and that is a great danger.

I do not think that that is actually happening yet, but I am afraid that such a thing will happen in future. As the number of detribalised Natives increase, so will the wages increase owing to the ever-increasing number of people offering their services.

These people have to find a place to work, they have to find an opportunity of earning money and they have to find employment somehow, and as they are coming in in ever increasing numbers, so will the wages go down. The employers will not have enough money to pay big wages to all of them. Large numbers will have to be employed, but at small wages, and in the end these people will be paupers.

It will be necessary for the Government to see
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what can be done for these people and they should be given
the first chance of employment on the mines. That will
affect us here in the country if only detribalised people are
employed in the mines and in labour centres. We shall have
no place of employment. (Witness appeared to be contradicting
himself, but repeated the statement through the interpreter,
on being questioned.) Of course, if the Government gives
these people fair chance of employment, it will not incon-
venience us. These people will have no other opportunity
of making a living like we have here, but all the same we shall
feel the pinch because there will be no opening for us to earn
money outside.

We, therefore, want to ask the Government to
provide opportunities to increase the areas for the Natives
so that these people who are away in the town with their
families may be able to use the ground set aside for the Natives.

There are other causes in the Native territories
here which have reduced the amount of land available for the
Native. Look, for instance, at the Railway line. You will
find that a big strip of ground is included in the Railway
property - a big strip of ground along the line. I say that
if less ground had been taken into the Railway ground, quite
a lot of land would have come back to the Natives. If I
remember rightly, the Commission under the chairmanship of
Mr. Sculley, dealt with this matter and made certain reconnec-
tions, but, as far as I know, matters have not been put
right.

Furthermore, the Native land in these territories
is very much squeezed in by ground owned by European farmers.
Although, as I have said before, the Government should see
that these people in the towns who own no land should be
provided for, I feel that the Government would be in somewhat
of a difficulty in obtaining such lands, as some of these parts
have been turned over to European farmers.

I also say that the Government in the labour centres should make compounds for these people who are working there, in the same way as they have on the mines.

MR. MOSTERT: Instead of having these schoolplaces, you want compounds so that the people there shall be under strict supervision? - Yes, that is what I am trying to convey.

On the matter of agriculture - agriculture in the Native territories is still very backward. At the same time, I am very pleased to say that attempts are being made to improve Native agriculture, especially in regard to the establishment of agricultural schools and the training there of Native students to become demonstrators in the locations. All this is done under supervision of the General Council. It is gratifying to see now that, even here in Pondoland, at Flagstaff, we have our Native school of agriculture, so that we shall not have the misfortune of being left behind by other nations who are progressing in agriculture.

Still, there are other matters which are somewhat detestable to the progress of agriculture in these territories, or rather, let me say, there are matters which stand in the way of good results. Among others, I would mention the fact of allowing cattle to go on reaped lands in winter. The effect of this is that people are prevented from making proper use of their lands, it prevents people from making the lands produce what they would otherwise produce. As a result of this - and this is a very serious factor - we are in danger of a shortage of mealies. We only plough once during the season. We reap our lands and we eat our mealies before we start ploughing again. And there are no opportunities of having a winter crop, because we allow our lands to be used
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as pasturage at the same time. The General Council, however, has seen its way to try to assist the Natives and it is trying to improve this by means of fencing the land.

I am sorry to say that no progress has been made in that respect, but it is the desire of the General Council that something should be done here. It is very doubtful, however, whether people are really taking advantage of the assistance offered them and given them by the Council. My people are not ploughing as they should do. I think it would help a very great deal if attempts were made by the Government to induce the Native to fence the lands rather than leave them open as they are at present.

Another source of difficulty is that our Native land in the locations, that is to say our arrable lands, are not all on one side. The trouble is that some of the arrable lands are here and others are a distance away, with a lot of grazing ground in between. An attempt, however, is being made to get the arrable lands all on one side of the grazing ground and the kraals on the other side, but even that attempt is not being used as it should be and the improvement which is looked forward to is not forthcoming to the extent that one could wish it.

If it so happens that a man might elect to have his kraal at one solitary place, which should have been grazing ground, he simply does so. That sort of thing interferes with progress and development. I think suitable arrangements should be made whereby kraals should be allotted in one part of the location — whereby arrable land should be in one part and grazing ground in a different part altogether. That would allow for a great deal more grazing ground and that would do away with the general talk which we hear that the number of stock in these territories has increased to such an extent that it is more than the grazing ground can carry.
Mr. Soxujwa

If suitable arrangements could be made to have pastoral ground on one side of the location and arrable ground on a different part, a considerable space of ground would be available for the purpose of grazing. Let me say, Mr. Chairman, that in these parts there is as yet no congestion. It is difficult to say what kind of stock Natives possess, but I do say that it is desirable that the Native stock should be improved and that it should be of good quality.

Let me also say that the combatting of overstocking has been hindered by East Coast fever with the consequent lack of selling facilities. The imposition of quarantine regulations has prevented people from selling.

Now, I do not want to close my remarks without saying something about the mortality of the people in the locations, and I do certainly think that this is a matter of first-rate importance. After all, sir, these are our own people who are concerned. Mortality among adults and among infants in locations is appalling. The Government's idea of training Natives as doctors and also of training nurses, is an excellent one and we are most thankful to hear of it. We were just wondering when nurses were to be sent to the Native locations, because Natives in these parts are dying like flies.

The fact is there is no one to look after them; there is no care in regard to supplying these people with the medicines they require and the result is that a number of deaths is out of proportion. At the same time, the work done by the European doctors in the Native locations is such as to fill us with gratitude. There are some doctors who make it a regular practice to visit certain points in the locations where they attend to the Native patients so as to cope with these evils. But, unfortunately,
the nature of the ground is such as to place the greatest obstacles in the way of these men. The ground is rugged and parts are unapproachable and it is difficult for these people to visit all their patients or even for the patients to come to them. I, myself, reside at a place where it would be extremely difficult for a doctor to reach.

I should like to mention this and I should like to stress this point, that the Natives are only too glad to hear that the Government is prepared to provide opportunities for the Natives to become doctors.

With regard to education, I want to say that education among the Natives is not what it should be in the locations. There is some laxity there, there is some weakness with regard to attendance at schools, and the results are most harmful to the Native peoples. Progress in the Native location in regard to education is consequently very slow.

Education is a most important matter to a nation. The time has not yet arrived for us to have compulsory education. There are many factors which shew that it would not be possible yet for us to have compulsory education introduced. Nevertheless, things should not be left as they are.

There should be some other elements to force the Natives to send their children to school. I do not say it should be done by means of compulsory education, but there should be some way of bringing pressure to bear on the Native parents to send their children to school.

Again, there is a great desire among the Natives that they should be allowed opportunities by which their own people would be given the chance and the learning to become medical practitioners. The money for one to obtain such education - the provision of such funds - is more than one
Mr. Soxujwa could hope for. The cost is very high, and things being as they are, I again ask that the Government should try and see its way to assist us in this direction, in the same way in which the General Council has assisted certain people with regard to the securing of scholarships. We beg the Government to provide means whereby the Native people may have the opportunity of receiving medical training.

DR. ROBERTS: But are not some of these bursaries for men going in for medical training? I do not know.

Now, in regard to taxation. I cannot say much on this. Things, in these areas, are quite satisfactory in this respect. There is a fund which is called the "Native Development Fund", and if I am not wrong, I think that an amount of 4/- is deducted from every pound for the Native development. There are very many things in respect of which the Government should help us from that fund. I can remember a remark make by the Chairman of the General Council on this point. Among other things, he said "We are hammering on stone and we expect blood to come from that stone". When he said that, I took it that he said that, not because he was not sympathetic, but because he thought that the fund did not have sufficient money with which to meet our requirements. There is a general request that a further amount be deducted from that development fund, a further amount of 4/-, making it 8/- all told. We want the Native Development Fund to be able to meet the requirements of the Native population, and we want the Natives to advance. It is my honest opinion that our Native fund should be so increased.

Perhaps 8/- would be too much, but let us have 6/-, if 8/- would mean that the fund would run short. Mr.

CHAIRMAN: You suggest Hdagene, that there
Mr. Boxujwa

is no starvation now among the Native people in these areas. Now, can you remember a time when there was such starvation in Pondoland? (Mr. Ndabene): I think it was in 1913/14 when there was starvation.

Was that just a bad season?—There was a scarcity of ploughing oxen and the rainfall fell very short.

Now, you told us, Mr. Jico, that this sort of wooden hoe was occasionally used when you were still a boy?—Yes, that is so.

Was it just occasionally used, and not by everyone?—No, only the old, the elderly people were using it.

What sort of implements did most of the people use then at that time for turning over their ground?—At that time certain ploughs had been introduced which had been brought in by the white people. It was made of iron with a handle through a piece of wood, like that, sir. That was used at trading stations.

Your people did not make any. Your own hoes were used before the white man came?—Yes, we used to do such things ourselves. We made our own hoes. We put the stones on the fire and iron came out of these stones, and it was made into an axe.

Was that used to break the ground?—It was used to chop. We did not make any hoes.

DR. ROBERTS: Did you make your assegai heads?—Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Do you remember when you started using the plough that is drawn by the oxen?—No, I have no recollection when they came. When I started being intelligent and able to see things, there were a few ploughs here and there being used by my people.

DR. ROBERTS: Now, you say, Mr. Ndabene, that chiefs are losing control. Can you give us one or two
reasons why that should be so?—(Mr. Ndabene): One of the reasons is that a Native looks upon one man as his chief, and when he is told of another chief, then he wonders who really is his chief. Then he starts looking at this one and at that one, and he wonders who is the best chief between the two, and then he considers that the one is superior to the other. Then he looks to that one as his chief.

They do not recognise their own chief any more once they understand that they are under the white chief when a white chief is put over them, and they pay very little respect to their own petty chief. They only recognise the paramount chief and, even that, not in the same way as they did in the past. So they now look to the white chief only and their old chief has lost control.

But every Fondo would still give the same respect to your paramount chief?—No, not all of them. There are some who would not, and especially the poor Natives. The poor Native does not give very much respect to his chief because he says he can do nothing for him. That is how his mind works. He says, "What does this chief do for me now, he does not seem to do anything to help me". In the olden days, the poor Native used to go to his chief and the chief used to help him; he used to give him a supply of cattle or so. Sometimes these poor Natives were given a certain number of cattle as their own and they were given blankets and other things which they needed. Today that is not so. The poor man has no wife to assist him, he has nobody. In the olden days, he would go to the chief's kraal and he would stay there and receive all the support he needed from the chief and the chief's headmen.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Has that been done away with?—Yes.
Mr. Soxujwa

DR. ROBERTS: But, out of respect, the Native would still acknowledge their chief?—They say "Well, I get nothing from my chief now and I do not care so much for him now". You will have two Natives walking together and they will see a chief. The one man will say "There is a chief, let us salute him", but the other will reply "No, I get nothing from him". He will say he works for the Government and gets paid by the Government, why does he not help us.

MR. LUCAS: Why does not the chief help the poor people that he used to?—He cannot do it now, for this reason. In those days the chief would collect all his men together and chase away the other man—they would go in force against another chief, take his cattle and bring all the cattle back with them. When they got back to their homes, they would distribute those cattle among the people. They would kill some of the cattle to eat, keep some for milk, and distribute the others. Today they cannot do that any more and there are no cattle to distribute.

DR. ROBERTS: In regard to this deferred pay, would you defer the pay of the men who go to Johannesburg, by law?—I am not able to say by law, but I would say that it should be done by a proclamation of some sort, or some assistance should be given by the Government so that the people who are left at home would have something to keep them alive.

It would have to be done in some way or another by the Government?—Yes—it would have to be done by law.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Would you have the money paid to the parents, to the father of the man?—No, I should say that it would have to be paid to the man himself when he gets home.

MR. MOSTERT: Do you think it is possible to make
Mr. Soxujma

a law like that where a grown up man goes to work—could a man like that be compelled by law to send his money back—would they be agreeable to that?—Yes, I think so. Today it is only the raw Natives who do it. It is not a man like the court interpreter—not these educated men. They are in a different position and do not join up. If a man like that goes to the mines or to the labour centres, he goes on his own.

You are only referring to boys who join?—When I say joining, I mean recruited boys.

You cannot do it with the others?—I may add this, that even if a Native went up on his own, there should be a limited time, such as twelve months, after which he should be obliged to return to his home.

Natives go up for 12 months, do they?—Yes.

But the Pondoos used to go for longer, how long do they go for now?—They go for about nine months.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: And do they stay longer than that?—Yes, they stay longer than that.

DR. ROBERTS: To whom does the cattle given in dowry really belong?—The cattle given in dowry belongs to the father of the girl or to the guardian.

We have had evidence that it belongs to the children of the woman. Does it really belong to the father and not to the children?—No, it certainly does not belong to the children. It belongs to the father.

CHAIRMAN: But have not those cattle to be kept by the father so that they will be available for the children, so that, if the children shall be in want, they can go back to the grandfather for support?—No, they do not have anything to do with the husband's side. The children would not go to the father of the woman.
Mr. Soxujwa.

The children would not be able to go for support when they are in need, to the father of their mother?— No. Of course, if these children visit the woman's father and the woman's people, it would be different, but they cannot claim anything out of the dowry. The woman's father can help them if he wants to, but that is all.

But they are entitled to support?— If dowry were paid — no they are not entitled to support out of the cattle.

MR. MOSTERT: It would merely be an act of grace?— Yes, that is all. Not particularly out of his cattle. They could not claim any assistance out of the dowry cattle.

MR. LUCAS: Have not the children of that marriage a claim on the father's kraal and not on the mother's kraal?— Yes, that is so. They would have a claim on the father's and not on the mother's. As a matter of fact, there is no inheritance whatever on the woman's side.

DR. ROBERTS: The cattle really belong to the father of the girl?— Yes, or to the legal guardian.

Supposing the dowry is ten head of cattle and the girl has gone wrong; how much would that be reduced to?—If a woman has gone wrong, of course there are many ways in which a woman could be pardoned. If she is sent back to her people for her own wrong, some of the dowry would be returned to her husband, less one head of cattle, one beast for each child born to her, but if she is accused, say she was accused of witchcraft, in that case if the woman returns to her people and if she has born any children, there is no claim for the restoration of the dowry.

What circumstances do you think would help the children to stay at school, if you do not want compulsory education to be introduced?— (Mr. Soxujwa): The laws should
Mr. Soxujwa

be made so that children who have once gone to school should be kept there.

Do you mean that they must not go away?—No, they should be kept at school. The trouble arises that, when these children are sent to school, they simply leave of their own accord.

So it comes to this, that you would have what is really partly compulsory education for those who are at school?—Yes.

Do you know that there is an opportunity for medical education in this country?—I am not clear on that.

They can take two years at Fort Hare?—Is that so.

Do you mean to say that you would be satisfied with 6/- out of the development fund?—I do not say that we should be satisfied, but I say that I am afraid that if we take too much, too little will be left behind.

Do you know that the Bunga wanted 8/-?—Yes, sir, I know it. I am not a member of that.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: You said that your young men went away to the towns and remained away a long time. Is there a tendency for some of them not to come back at all?—(Mr. Mdabene): Yes, there is a tendency.

Is that tendency increasing?—Yes.

And is the tendency not to send money also on the increase?—Yes, I am afraid it is.

And are there some women suffering on account of that?—Yes, there are. Say a man marries his wife and goes away. I have told you that Native women come here and ask that their husbands should be sent back. The husbands go away and they remain away too long, and one of the results of that is that there is an increase in adultery.

Did I understand you to say that formerly the woman was not allowed to attend beer drinks before she had
Native Witnesses

three or four children?— (Mr. Jico): I said so, and that was the case in the past. These women used to attend beer drinks after they had been married for a long time and were old.

But today the young women are attending the beer drinks?— Yes, and they return to their kraals late in the night.

Do you know what is the cause of that?— It is because the parental control over the children is getting slack.

MR. MOSTERT: You told us that the young boy resents nowadays being chastised by his parents?— That is so.

And then he runs away?— Yes.

Where does he go to?— He may run to the mining centres.

Are the parents then the cause of these boys going away to the Rand?— No, we do not chastise them now because they run away to the mines.

Do they not run away anyhow?— Yes, they leave the cattle alone on the fields.

SENATOR VAN NISKERK: What is the reason for their running away?— They are induced to run away by the labour runners and they go to the sugar plantations and they leave school.

MR. MOSTERT: What is your description of a detribalised Native?— (Mr. Ndabene): Natives not collected together in one tribe, mixed Natives no more under the control of their chief; Natives who no longer adhere to the customs of their own tribes.

Do you not find that there are Natives here who live here and go to Johannesburg for seven, eight or nine years, and then, after that period of time, come back. Now, would you call a boy like that, who has been away for 7 or 8 years, a detribalised Native?— No, these boys do not come back. You
Native Witnesses

may have boys who come back after five years, but that is not because they want to come back but it is on account of some reason; they may have had an illness or an accident or so, that is the reason.

Would you call that boy a detribalised Native while he is there?— Yes, I would call him that because he has lost all the customs of his own tribe.

When he comes back to his kraal, do you take him back as a tribesman?— Well, he is no good to the tribe, he has lost all the customs of the tribe.

But what do you do, do you take him in just the same?— Yes, we do take him back.

**MAJOR ANDERSON:** If a chief had more power, would it help to keep the tribe together better?— Yes, I think it would help a lot.

Do you think it is a pity that the chief has not got more power?— I think it is a pity.

**SENIOR VAN NIEKERK:** What great power could be given the chief?— I think he should be given the power to try cases criminally as well as civilly. Taxes should be paid to him and he should pay the Government.

You would give him criminal as well as civil jurisdiction?— I would give him that power.

**DR. ROBERTS:** What would the magistrate do?— I think the magistrate should be there to review the cases.

**SENIOR VAN NIEKERK:** Do you not think that the time has past for the chief ever to get back his power?— No, I do not think so because there are chiefs who are going on with the times.

**MAJOR ANDERSON:** Would it be possible for the Government to say that a man cannot be a chief unless he is properly educated and fitted to carry out these duties?— I do not think that the Government could say that he could not
Native Witnesses

be a chief, but if he is going to have the power of trying these cases, then the Government can say that they would only allow those chiefs to try those cases who are capable of doing so. The chiefs should be given an opportunity of fitting themselves.

DR. ROBERTS: Do you think you could have that power for the chiefs and the Bunga both together?—Yes, I think so. It could be the same for the Native as for the white man. The white man has his king and his parliament.

SENATOR VAN HIERK: He has a magistrate?—That is so.

MR. LUCAS: How would these extra powers which you would give the chiefs prevent detribalisation?—I suppose it could be worked in a way to prevent detribalisation.

MR. MOSTERT: Do you not think that it will have the effect of hastening more detribalisation?—Not necessarily.

MR. LUCAS: Did you not say that one of the causes of detribalisation was that the Native had to go to work?—Yes.

Would he not go just the same if the chief had bigger powers given to him?—In that case, the chief could allow him to go away to work for a certain time and he could tell him that, if he exceeded a certain time and stayed away longer than that, he would not allow him to come back, because if he stayed away longer he would have lost all the manners and the customs of the tribe.

MR. MOSTERT: Is that why you propose a period of twelve months and say that he should not be away longer than that?—Yes, and among other things, if a man is allowed to go away for twelve months, he will still have the love of his family left in him and he will want to return home, but if he goes away for two or three years, he will lose all that, he will stop thinking about his parents and his wives and his family.
MR. LUCAS: But would they do with less, would fewer of them stay away a long time if the chiefs were given that power which you advocate?—I think so. You see, the chief would tell them "If you exceed a certain time, I do not want you any more". He would not come back and I think that a man would like to avoid that.

But they do not come back now. Why should they come back then?—I think they would. Another thing is that that man would not go and make mischief in the country. I want to say this, all the rascals are people who have stayed for a long time on the mines. Then, when they go wrong, the mining people send them back to us and they are useless to us and they cause a lot of trouble and quarrels.

Have you had trouble that way?—Yes.

SENIOR VAN NIEKERK: If a man is made to come back after twelve months, your idea is that he will not lose his tribal connection?—No, he will not.

MR. MOSTERT: Do you know anything about recruiting?—No, I cannot say that I know much about it.

Do you not find that the boy who is recruited comes back home much sooner than the boy who goes up independently?—No, I find no difference. The one who want on his own might stay six months and come back, if he wished to, and the other man who has been recruited might also stay six months. I think they are both the same, there is no difference.

Yes, but the boy who goes after having been recruited, goes for a certain term, six or nine months, whatever the case may be, and the incentive for him to come back is greater when his contract is completed, whereas the boy who goes independently likes the work and the place and he will stay away longer than the other one?—No, I do not think so. The contract is only six months. The boy who joins up is in the same position as the boy who goes up on his own.
Native Witnesses:
The boy who joins up has no money himself and he owes money, so he says to himself "I owe money and I want money to go up, I must earn something, so I must go to a recruiter and get an advance, pay my debts and then have the means of going up". If he had his own money, he would not join up, he would go on his own. Still, in the end there is no difference.

You said that you preferred the boys who live in the school place in the town location to be also in the compounds?—(Mr. Soxuja): Yes, in the compound—that would be a good thing for them.

Is that because you want them to be under strict supervision?—Yes, I think so.

Do you Johannesburg and the compounds on the mines?—Yes, I know it very well, I was there for ten years.

And do you know that they are under strict supervision there?—That is so. I myself was on the mines and I was under strict supervision in the compounds.

DR. ROBERTS: It is rather a serious business that of sending back the bad boys from Johannesburg?—It is.

They want to get rid of them there; where would you put them; would you put them in a labour colony, the ones that are very bad, the ones that Johannesburg wants to get rid of?—No, I say that they should keep the bad boys.

Would you not send them to a labour colony?—No, as bad as they are, they should be kept with bad people.

MR. LUCAS: You mean they should be kept in the places where they were made bad?—Yes.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: You are pleading for more doctors and nurses. Now, would the Native people in the reserve where you are living, be willing to contribute something towards the upkeep of these nurses?—They do pay for the medicine, but that is not my object. I am asking for the assistance of the Government for these nurses to be sent.
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Say the Government provided for the training of these nurses, would these nurses be able to make a livelihood among their own people?—Yes, nicely.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Do you agree with the other witnesses about the increased authority for the chief—do you agree that that would act against detribalisation?—No, I am not quite in agreement with that. The paramount chiefs will be here and those people will be over there, and I do not think that the paramount chief will have the power over those people on the mines or elsewhere, to make them stay there only a limited time. I am rather of opinion that a law should be made under which these people on the mines and elsewhere should not be allowed to remain there beyond a certain time; and, if it is found that their time has expired, then those people should be made to return to their homes.

MR. LUCAS: You told us about a change in the habits of women in regard to beer drinking. Can you tell us of any other changes that you have noticed in the way the women act—can you remember any of the claims they make?—(Mr. Jico)

The children are not helping the parents as they used to do before. Say you have your young men and women here—they go to beer drinks and they simply do not help us in the cultivation of our lands.

Can you tell us some of the things which the women used to do when you were a young man and which they do not do now?—The girls, when they have reached the age of puberty, will go to a ceremony—they will go into a hut and undergo the ceremony of "intonjani".

Did they not do that before?—In the olden days they would go and attend this ceremony in the early morning and, after this, they would return to their homes. But now these young men and women, after they have attended those ceremonies, they do not go home any more as they did. They