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NATIVE ECONOMIC COMMISSION.

UMTATA 14th NOVEMBER 1930 9.30. a. m.

FORTYNINTH 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.

Senator P.W.Le Roux van Niekerk.

Mr. C. Faye(Secretary)

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Dr. MANASSEH ROBERT MAHLANGENI: Called and examined:-

CHAIRMAN: You are a doctor of medicine?- Yes.

I have a list here of subjects on which you are prepared to speak. Will you first of all tell the Commission what you have to bring forward on these various points. You are practising at Mount Frere, I understand and you are an L. R.C. and L.R.S. of Edinburgh, L.R.F.P. and L.R.F.S. of Glasgow M.B. of Toronto and L.M. of Dublin?-That is so. I have prepared certain notes on which I have a few words to say.

As to No.1 of your Agenda, factors leading to detribalisation, and also landless Natives, I have very little to say. In regard to the question of advantages, the only advantage that can be derived is in connection with lands under the communal system. The disadvantages are the impossibility to acquire private property. No No improvements are carried on owing to the present law In regard to the economic results and social aspects of detribalisation, I have down here "Resulting poverty and poor health". I have also written a note here that educated Natives are inclined to adopt European modes of living.

Uneducated Natives - Their mode of living leads more or less to immoral habits-. In regard to the economic function of lobolo, lobolo depends, more or less on the classes of Native in the different parts of the territories.

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In regard to landless Natives, detribalisation and migration from farms in surveyed areas - the future is very dark. On the subject of Native migration - this is not very common except by landless Natives. I have a note here about lack of water. In regard to Native migration in inter-rural areas, this is frequent owing to lack of land. Regarding economic effects of Native migration and the introduction of Natives from extra Union Territories - this, in most cases, is not profitable.

In regard to the heading "Native Agriculture", there is good improvement noticeable. Agricultural schools have been established by the Bunga and the Native Farmers' Associations and Native demonstrators are doing good work.

Regarding the effect upon Natives of Natives working for Europeans, I should say that this is very good. The effect upon European farming is also very good and one of the results of the employment of Native labour on European farms is, farmers are able to get cheap labour. I now come to rural Native areas and I say that the Land Administration is more or less impeding progress. There is considerable congestion which is caused by unfair administration. You find scattered kraals and lands, and too much land is given to Europeans in these areas. Another difficulty in connection with the distribution of lands in Native areas is the preference given by headmen to their friends.

In regard to afforestation, insufficient provision is made for it. On the subject of obstacles to the more economic use of land, one of the difficulties is the lack of a scheme. The lands are unfenced and drought has very evil effects. The concentration of arable grazing lands would be a very good thing and so would a scheme for the concentration of residential plots, that is to say, if

hygienic and sanitary conditions were looked after from the very beginning, but under present conditions that sort of thing, that is to concentration, would be most undesirable.

On the question of mortality among adults and children, I consider that the mortality among big children and adults would be about sixty to seventy in every thousand per annum. Infantile mortality is very much worse - it would be about sixty percent per annum. One has to bear in mind that this is merely an estimate, as there are no statistics available to give anything definite.

In regard to stock, the types of stock and overstocking, I would say that the types are very poor. Overstocking is due to restrictions and to the want of markets and also to tribal customs and to ignorance of farming.

I now come to the question of indigency, which is dealt with under the heading of "General Economic Conditions". In the past, indigency was practically unknown, but lately there has been a good deal. I shall come back to that again.

In regard to banking and co-operative systems, this has only been started recently in different parts, but requires to be placed on a legal basis, and one should see to it that it is put into good hands. In regard to the cost and standard of living of Natives in rural and urban areas, I should say that their cost of living exceeds their income. The credit system I regard as a very bad thing.

Now, in regard to indigency, there is a good deal of that now and nothing is being done to help the Native indigents. The development of Native handicraft shews an improvement. This is a very good thing. On the question of Native products and markets and the facilities for the sale of such products, I regret to say that there are no markets for such products. The chief product is mealies.

But the difficulty is that the Natives cannot get any cash from the traders for their products and the only way is for them to sell their goods among themselves, and even then that is not profitable.

On the subject of competition of Natives with Europeans and Cape Coloured people, I can only say that there is no such competition. I then come to Section 10 of your Questionnaire, which deals with the subject of the education of Natives. As to its results and value, considering the numbers and the present standard of education of Natives, I can only say that the results are very good indeed.

You raise the subject of occupations in which Natives, educated Natives, are engaged - my reply to that is that they are engaged as clerks, teachers, demonstrators in agricultural schools and so on, while they also do carpentry work, wagon work and general work in printing offices. As to the effect of education on the earning capacity of Natives and wage rates~~is~~, very little consideration has been given to this.

In regard to Native taxation and its extent, a man with a family pays £1.10.- per year and a woman pays 10/-. A young man without any family pays £1 per year. There are two modes of taxation - there is direct taxation as set out above, and indirect taxation. As to the effect on the cost and the mode of living and the general welfare of Natives - I consider that this taxation leads to credit.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: What about the effect of the taxation on the labour supply? - The effect on the labour supply is very good.

In relation to crime and litigation - I should say that want of education is responsible for crime. The prevailing ideas of superstition and witchcraft have a lot to

do with this, and all these things lead to poverty and drunkenness. Affrays occur among the Natives which result in charges of culpable homicide, stocktheft and rape.

In regard to racial relations and the promotion of inter-racial good feeling and co-operation, I consider that the joint councils are the proper channels to promote inter-racial good feeling.

On the subject of trade, trade between Natives is only done in stock and mealies. The trade between non-Natives and Natives is mostly carried on by the storekeepers.

CHAIRMAN: With regard to infantile mortality, you gave the rate as 60%. Can you tell the Commission on what observation that figure is based?— As there are no statistics on that point, I have to base that figure on taking my patients - I have to go according to my patients and take the number that are pregnant at a certain time and then I have to look at the number that are lost and at what age they die.

Now, if your starting point is pregnancy, that would mean that you include a certain number of still-birth?— Exactly.

You have no idea what the figure would be if you excluded still-birth?— I do not include them at all, I leave them out. I am only taking those that are born alive and then I take the figure for a year.

Your figure is not pregnancy - your starting point is not, but birth?— Yes, I start from birth.

You find that sixty percent of the children have died?— I would not confine that to my patients only. Say a woman came one day with a child. I would examine that child and then, for the sake of statistics I would ask that woman how many children she has had. She will always

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tell me how many she has had and how many are dead and at what age they died. That is now I get to these figures.

There would be a starting selective principle at work in the way in which you get your statistics. I mean this, it is based on patients, but a healthy woman who does not require the assistance of a doctor does not come into your statistics. All her children may live?- She is not always healthy. Once in a while she has to come and see a doctor, and one is always inclined to ask such questions. That is how I get to it.

She may come in for anything, but there may be cases, the best cases, that would not come to you at all?- As a matter of fact, I do not know of any family that does not require a doctor.

DR. ROBERTS: Are you sure of that?- I am almost certain that there is no family which does not require a doctor.

There are hundreds of Native families who never require a doctor?- Those must be cases of people who have no money to go to a doctor, and that is the worst part of it.

CHAIRMAN: For <sup>how</sup> many families would your observations been taken, and over what period of time?- I should think that I have studied this for about a year to get this information. Of course, one cannot be quite definite.

You have studied it for one continuous period of twelve months?- Yes.

And how many families, or how many mothers?- I could not say how many, but this is the estimate which I have come to, that it is sixty percent.

Your figure may be considerably wrong, but still it will give us an idea. Would you say that it is a matter of 200 families?- I think I have a sufficiently large practise to be sure of that point and I think that other doctors would

confirm my statement.

I particularly want to get an idea of what the size is of the sample. Would it run into thousands or into hundreds?- It would be more than hundreds, it would be thousands. It is a large number.

MR. LUCAS: How many a day, how many Native married women?- It would be very hard for me to answer that question. I have a large practise.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Do you have a very extensive practise among the Natives?- Yes, I have.

CHAIRMAN: Could it be five married women a day?- I should say very likely it is more.

So that the number of mothers may be anything between 1,000 and 2,000?- Yes, it may be.

It is not likely to be higher than 2,000 in the one year?- No, I do not think it higher.

What is the cause of death in those cases where you have actually attended the child?- In most cases it is stomach trouble, enteritis.

Do you find that the mothers are not very careful in how they handle the babies?- They are very backward.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Is the feeding the great thing?- Yes, the feeding and the care are bad.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Are they improving now?- No, I am afraid that it is very hard for them to improve.

CHAIRMAN: Now, you say that the women who come to you tell you how many children they have had. Can you give us an idea of the number of children that a married woman who has completed fertility would normally have had. Take the cases that have come before you, what would be the number of children that have been born to a woman who has past child-bearing age?- An average of about nine.

DR. ROBERTS: Now, do you find a difference in the fecundity between an educated woman and the pure red

woman?- There is a lot of difference, I think.

What is the difference, for instance, between the educated woman of your class and the pure red woman?- As a matter of fact, the educated women of my class are in a better position to look after their children than the others.

Yes, but do they have more children?- No, I do not think so - I think it is just about the same.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: But do the educated women have more children alive, or do they die just the same?- The educated women who know how to look after them have more alive.

CHAIRMAN: Now about the mortality among the adults, is that high too?- Yes, I think it is very high if you consider what it is among the Europeans.

To what causes do you ascribe that?- I should say that the cause of that is poverty among the Natives. They are unable to see a doctor and to get medical aid. Some of them have to die without any medical aid whatever.

What diseases are the most prevalent?- I should say that chest troubles are.

Do you find that chest troubles carry off a number of Natives too?- No. Chest troubles are most prevalent.

I want to put it this way, do you find that infants die of chest troubles?- No, they die as a consequence, they die from a secondary cause.

DR. ROBERTS: Your primary cause is enteritis?-Yes

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: To what do you ascribe this chest trouble among the Natives - to insufficient clothing?- I should say that that is another cause.

CHAIRMAN: And do you find that the Native grows to the same age as one finds among the Europeans?- Yes.

Yes, I know that quite a number of them grow to a great age, but in the bulk do you find as many old men among

the Natives as you find among the Europeans?— No, in comparison I would say not at present.

Why do you lay stress on the 'not at present'?— Of late, the old men are dying a bit faster.

DR. ROBERTS: Are they dying before they are old?— Yes.

Because an old man must die?— I suppose so.

CHAIRMAN: Have you come across cases of Natives dying from miners phthisis in any of its forms?— Yes, quite a number.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Are they men on the Pensions List?— I do not know whether they are.

CHAIRMAN: Is miners phthisis a cause of other deaths which ultimately become primary?— Very often it is primary.

Yes, but in other cases, is it the cause of something else which becomes primary?— Yes, that does happen.

Will you give us an instance?— Yes, causes such as bad feeding, insanitary conditions, low state of health.

MR. MOSTERT: What is more or less the altitude at which you work here?— It is a moderate altitude.

Would it be about 3,000 or 4,000 feet?— About that. Mount Frere is something over 3,000 feet.

Is it a moist area?— Not very.

Because, with your chest trouble, owing to the altitude -- would you put it down to that? You do not find these chest troubles in other areas. Is it misty there?— No, not very. Wherever there are a good many boys who go to the mines, you come across these chest troubles.

But you do not find the chest troubles among the children?— No, not as many.

MR. LUCAS: You spoke about the grouping of residential lots in the locations being dependent on the provisions of sanitation. Have you had any experience of areas

where there has been such grouping?— No, I have not.

In your district, is the drinking water supply satisfactory?— I think it is more or less satisfactory at present.

Now, you said that there was a lot of indigency in your district. In what sense do you suggest, or in what sense do you use the word indigency?— Poverty. There are a lot of poor people in that district.

Are there any Natives in your district who have anybody to help them, like the indigents in some of the towns. We have heard that, in the towns, they are looked after?— There are quite a lot of them.

Because, generally, the Natives help one another. Are there Natives who have anyone to help them?— There are some. I do not say it is a help if one is very poor and one cannot clothe himself and someone else gives him an old rag once in a while, and a few handfuls of mealies now and then. That sort of thing is very hard.

Are there any who have to beg?— Well, they have to go from kraal to kraal so as to get something to eat.

Are these cases few or many?— I would not say that they are many, there are few of them.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Are these old men or young men?— They are old men and old women.

DR. ROBERTS: Do you find much syphilis among your patients or among your people?— There is, to some extent, but not very much.

Would you be willing to venture upon a ratio, say that you have a thousand people in Mount Frere, how many of these would be syphilitic?— Say, between 15 and 20 in a thousand.

You do not think it would be more than that?— No.