

CONFIDENTIAL

University College of Fort Hare,
P.O. Fort Hare, Alice, C.P.
September 2, 1958.

C2.84

Adv. A. I. Maisels,
831 His Majesty's Chambers,
Commissioner Street,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Advocate Maisels,

You advised me to write to you if it should transpire that, as a result of my being involved in the protracted proceedings of the Treason Trial, the College authorities intended to take any steps which might be detrimental to my interests.

At the outset I may point out that during the Preparatory Examination the College Council granted me leave of absence from my duties as Acting Principal, as I then was, with full pay. At the beginning of this year a new Principal was appointed, and I then returned to my post as Professor of Social Anthropology and Head of the Department of African Studies. The proceedings of the Preparatory Examination were very protracted, as you know, and now that it appears as if the Trial proceedings are going to be just as protracted, doubts have been expressed as to whether the Council would be justified in continuing to grant me leave of absence on the same terms. I gather that what is now contemplated is that if I am given any leave of absence at all, it should be without pay. This would probably be followed by termination of service, possibly after due notice, with consequent loss of pension rights.

I have been in the teaching profession since 1925 and on the staff of the University College of Fort Hare since 1936. I have had an unblemished record throughout, and if it had not been for this case I would probably have become the first African Principal of Fort Hare. I have a family of five children, three of whom are still at University and High School. It seems a terrible hardship to me that I should have to sacrifice my salary which at present is £1600 p.a. plus C.O.L.A. at the rate of £234 p.a. plus my hardearned pension rights, all before I have been found guilty of any crime.

Reluctant as I am to do so I must appeal to you to make further representations on my behalf to the Crown with a view to a possible withdrawal of the charge against me. Now that the Crown has been given an opportunity to reconsider their indictment, they may perhaps be willing to "limit the scope of the Trial" by limiting the number of the Accused.

I must apologise for trespassing upon your valuable time in this way, but you will appreciate the circumstances which have compelled me to do so.

Hoping to hear from you in the near future,

Yours sincerely,

J. R. Matthews