

Louis Trichardt,

5th August, 1930.

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NATIVE ECONOMIC COMMISSION

LOUIS TRICHARDT, TUESDAY, 5th AUGUST, 1930.

at 10.10 a.m..

PRESENT:

Senator P.W. le Roux van Niekerk,
Chairman.
Dr. H.C.M. Fourie.
Mr. F.A.W. Lucas.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

- (1) NEMARANGONE }
(2) JOHANNES MASHAPA } Representing the Tribe of Chief Sibasa.

NEMARANGONE: There are a lot of things that trouble us. If we could do without being troubled like this we could live in peace. There are lots of farms in this country, and all the people come and gather in one place. As we are living now, we do not know how to separate ourselves; we all gather together too much in one place; we must be lessened. That is why we say that the Government has got something against us. I say that some people are put to sit in the hot sun and some in the shade. Those that sit in the hot sun have a hard time.

With reference to the roads: Sibasa's people and Mpafuri's people - I say that the ganger who takes Sibasa's and Mpafuri's people out to repair the roads gets paid, but Mpafuri and Sibasa, what do they get?--- When things are like that I say it is like a man sitting in the hot sun. There is a place called Chitutuni; a man came there to , settled down; he has got a portion of Sibasa's location. This man came there, settled down, said it was his farm; that he had got it from the Government.

There/.....

There was an Induna put there by Sibasa; his name is Chaurbi; he was chased away by a man who came to settle on that ground. That is a place where Sibasa used to have his early mealies. Now he cannot go near the place. This man settled there last year. Now, it seems to me that we are still tied up like a man when he has got a baboon: he keeps it tied up. Now are we going to live if it carries on like that; the same as you have a beast, if you cut one horn off will its horns still be the same? When it is going along you see that one horn is shorter than the other. I say it is like when one man gets paid and the other does not, like Mpafuri's and Sibasa's boys working on the road, and the ganger only gets paid. Another thing which troubles us a lot is that some of our people go away to work for two and three years; they come back and have not got a bean. When the son goes away like that and comes back without any money, we get into trouble. How is it that we cannot get on. Of mealies we do not get a good crop. Sometimes we look at a piece of ground and say, "We must go and make our lands there," and then we are prevented from doing so.

CHAIRMAN: Who prevents you?--- Similar to when a boy works for a farmer and gets a hiding from that farmer, he goes and reports to the police, and when he comes to court the court says "You got a hiding because you do not work." The blame is always against the native. The white man does not do any wrongs. You get into trouble because perhaps you have not got any money; you are not a well-off man and get into trouble. If you were a well-off man you could keep out of trouble. If I have not got any money, I perhaps owe somebody something and have to go and borrow from somebody else again. Perhaps if I am starving

and want to buy food, I borrow the money to buy it; everything has to be paid for; even clothing you have to buy. The white people even, if they do work, do not work without a native; they have to have a native to assist them. Then, the white man gets on better than the native; the native is left behind. He has got nothing. Like this office here; they are police; there are native constables here; they go and arrest the boys who never pay their taxes. This police boy, even though he does arrest these boys for not paying the tax, he gets the ordinary salary and does not get anything extra. The white people always get something extra. The native has got nobody to look after him; he does not get anything extra. I thought that the Government would look after us both - white and black the same. That hurts us, because some people are picked out and the others are put aside. Some are looked after and some are not. Next month there will be lots of the rivers full. When we come from Sibasa, there is a big river in between, and if we cannot get through that river we are perhaps called to court here and cannot get through, and we get into trouble. If the white people like us and are always calling us, why do not they build a bridge over that river, and then some people will not get washed away. That is the road that Sibasa has to repair; Sibasa has to repair the road, and we cannot get through if the river is full. Another thing is about the dipping of cattle - the dips - the dipping tank. We like the dips because they keep our cattle healthy. The only way in which the dips are troubling us is that the cattle are dipped every seven days; for years they have

been/.....

have been dipping like that - once every seven days. We do not say that it does them harm; these cattle are quite all right. Another thing which troubles us is, we are prevented from letting our cattle graze on Crown Lands; they graze on the small grazing lands where there is nothing much to get; the grass is all eaten away; there is no grass to thatch with. We cannot afford to buy galvanised iron. Where are we going to sleep? We have not got money to buy iron. The other day when the Commission came to Sibasa, you found me with the same pair of trousers on; if I had had other clothes I would have put them on. It is because I am a pauper. That is all I have to say.

JOHANNES MASHAPA: I have nothing to add because the first witness has said all that I could have said.

THE CHAIRMAN: Nemarangone, you say that a farmer came to the Location to settle there?--- Yes last year.

Are you quite sure that that farm belongs to the Location?---- (JOHANNES MASHAPA): It is Crown lands; It is between Mpafuri's Location and Sibasa.

If it is Crown Lands, it does not belong to you. Therefore, the white man had the right to come there. Now you tell us that you have to repair the roads?---

(NEMARANGONE): Yes.

And that you get no payment for doing it?---- The natives who repaired the road did not get paid. But we did not want the pay; we wanted the Chiefs to get the money - to get something.

Did you make a complaint to the Commissioner?-- No.

But was not the Chief willing to let you do the work and for you to get no payment?-- He was willing, yes,;

You/.....

You have now got a motor service to Sibasa?-- There is a motor service from here to the Native Commissioner's, but not from the Native Commissioner's to Sibasa's Kraal.

And he comes back from there too?--- Yes.

Was it not a thing that the Government did, to give you that transport?--- It is a good thing.

Do not you think that you, on your side, can do something to keep up the roads?--- The Government has given you the service, and you have lots of men in the Location?--- Yes, it is right that we should repair it; we always have this road repaired, but the ganger, the man who looks after them, he gets a little salary; why should not our Chief also get something - not exactly the value of the work, but have something presented to him?

Now, you said you live too much together, and that there is plenty of room outside; what did you mean by that?--- ----- we are all crushed together; there are lots of natives come from here and go and live down there who are chased away from farms. The place is getting too much; there are no lands.

What do you want then? Do you want the Chief to have the right to stop these people coming to the Location?--- The thing is, the Chief will take all the natives on who come there, but we cannot get out location extended. We should be able to have money to buy food, because we will not have enough land.

You said natives were coming in from farms, etc.; are there also natives coming in from Portuguese country?----- There are some who come from Portuguese Territory who come into our Location.

Are there many?--- No, not many.

MR. LUCAS:/.....

MR. LUCAS: What natives have come into the farms lately; what different tribes? Or, what are they all of your tribe?----- There are the Mavendas that come in, and the Shangaans.

Have you any idea as to how many have come in, in the last year?----- No. The Chief would know how many. The Sub-Native Commissioner at Sibasa would know, because whenever a native comes in we report to the Sub-Native Commissioner at Sibasa.

Have you yourself spoken to any of those who have come in and asked why they have come in?----- No, we do not ask them why they have come here; they only tell us that they have been chased away from the farm.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do not they say why they have been chased away?----- They just say "We have been chased away by the farmer."

Is there any land near the Location that is not occupied, that the Government could give you?----- Yes, there is a lot of land alongside the Location.

It is not occupied?--- It is not occupied; there are a few natives on it; it is too big for the natives on it.

You said you were not allowed to sow where you liked; what did you mean by that?--- (THE INTERPRETER): That is, on the piece of Crown Land. They always used to have a place to run to whenever they wanted to grow early mealies.

You said, when the children go to work they bring back no money?--- (NEMARANGONE): Yes.

Are there many of your young men - children - going out to work?--- Yes, several of them.

Of what age are they, more or less?--- They go from the age of about twelve up to a big man like this one

(indicating).....

(indicating).

Do you include the big men amongst those who do not bring back the money?----- Yes, I include them also because they do not bring back money,

Mr. LUCAS: What happens to their money?--- If a man gets £3 per month and has to buy his own food and pay for his house or room wherein he sleeps, how much will he have over at the end of the month to buy clothes?

THE CHAIRMAN: Is your complaint that a native earns too litgle money?--- Yes.

Do you know how these people spend their money?--- He gets £3 a month, has to buy his own food, clohhes, and pay for his room; that is how he spends it.

Did these men tell you that they wrer earning only £3 a month?--- (MASHAPA): I was also working; I was getting £3 a month; had to buy my own food and pay for my room.

MR. LUCAS: Where was this?--- In Johannesburg.

THE CHAIRMAN: Whad did you say on that?--- I could save nothing. My wife and my children were at home; I took £2 of that and sent it home for them to buy food or clothing.

MR. LUCAS: £2 every month?----- Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: But then, you had been sending home £2 a month. The other witness says they have not been sending anything?--- (NEMARANGONE): I say that he has been sending money home, but others have not sent money home, and they are not getting enough pay when getting £3 a month.

The £2 you sent home: did you buy some cattle when you got back?--- (MASHAPA): No; I did not find any money left when I came home; my wife bought clothing for the children.....

children and herself.

What is the result of these people not sending home the money?--- (NEMARANGONE): I could not say: they may be spending it, or eating it up.

What was the result on the women and children that you left behind; did they have to go without food?---- If a boy spends his money all in Johannesburg and sends nothing home and the wife and children have nothing to wear or are starving they have to run to somebody for help.

We would like to know something more about these people going to work; do not some of these people who go out to work come back?--- Some of them never come back.

Are there many?--- Many of them.

Are they usually unmarried men?--- Some are married men; they get married there.

Most of them are unmarried when they leave the Location?--- Yes.

Can you think what is the reason why they do not come back again?--- I could not say; it may be that a man wants to live there, or perhaps he does not get enough money to come back with.

Has the Chief of the tribe got anything to do with it, is he too stringent on these people; are they afraid to come back?----- No, none of them go away leaving troubles behind - after getting into trouble.

You spoke about the police and other natives in Government Service and said that the white man got something extra; what did you mean by that?--- I say that the native constable goes away into the veld and arrests a man who is

hiding.....

hiding away; who has never paid taxes for years; he then comes back here and gets the ordinary salary; and the white man gets a big salary; if he goes out on an extra patrol or something, he gets more.

Who tells you that the policeman who goes out to look for a man gets extra?----- I say that for the work that is done together by white people and natives, the native gets a little salary and the white man might get from £20 up to £40 or £50.

Do you know that some natives earn more ~~and~~ than some white people?--- Yes, I know that; but why should only some get it; what about the others?

But we pay a man according to his value. If a man has got a responsible position we pay him much; if he has got a lower position we pay him less. Some natives have a higher position, and they get much pay. Some white men who have lower positions get very little pay?--- Yes, that is quite right. But supposing there is a big heavy iron lying outside and the white people want it shifted home, what do they do? They call the natives standing out there to carry it away. We go and carry a piece of iron away which is very heavy, and we only get a little pay for that.

Quite so. But when you want your water carried, you tell your piccanin or women to go and get the water?--- Yes, that is so.

You say you had some complaint to make about the dipping of cattle; you said you did not object to the dipping. What was the difficulty then?----- No, I say that when we are dipping such a lot, we want more grazing for our cattle. We do not say there is anything wrong in

dipping.....

dipping, but the cattle need more grazing.

As regards the grazing on Crown Lands; had you the right formerly to let your cattle graze on Crown Lands?---- Several years ago we used to let our cattle graze on Crown Lands. The cattle are now increasing; we did not ask for the right to let them graze there, but there they were grazing.

And have you been stopped now?---- Now we are afraid to let our cattle graze there; we stopped it because if any cattle graze on on the Crown Lands, the Sub-Native Commissioner makes us pay for them - and the cattle are increasing.

MR. LUCAS: You say the cattle are increasing?-- Yes.

Are you buying more cattle , or is it that there are more calves growing up?---- We are not buying, but they are increasing naturally.

What is the chief reason why natives want cattle?---- The chief reason is that we want them to lobola wives with.

But a man who has got a lot of cattle does not use them all for lobola, does he?---- No, we do not use them all for lobola.

You have told us that you have not got enough grazing. ---- Yes.

That means there are too many cattle there for the grass that you have got?---- Yes.

Could not your people be persuaded to keep fewer cattle and to sell those that are too many and to put the money in the bank, and then when you want more cattle to buy them with that money - and then you would not have to

keep.....

keep them grazing all the time?--- Several natives sell some of their cattle to get money to pay taxes; but they would not sell the cattle to bank the money.

Why will not they do that?-- It will take you a long time to find a man who will buy your cattle, because these people have not got any money.

But there are white people in other places who would buy the cattle?--- Yes, we do that; we sell our cattle to do that - natives who have not money - to pay taxes.

But still, you have got too many cattle; they want more grass than you have got on your location?--- Yes, we have got several cattle.

And the cattle are increasing?--- Yes.

And the grass is getting less?-- Yes.

By and by you will get a lot more cattle and have no grass, and then the cattle will die?--- Yes, that will happen.

Now, is it not better for you to keep must the right number of cattle, to sell the others, and keep the money, and then by and by when you want some more cattle you use the money to buy some? We want to help you, and not to find fault?--- Another thing is, I say there are lots of natives on the farm - as many natives as cattle, and there are not enough lands for them. What can we do with those natives? We have too many natives; we do not want to chase them away.

I am not talking about the natives just now; something else has got to be done about them. But, if you have got no grass you cannot have any cattle?--- Yes, there is no grazing for the cattle, and I say there are no lands also ~~the~~ for the natives.

Leave.....

Leave the question of lands for the native for a bit; that is another question; I will talk to you about that presently. What I want to talk ~~xxx~~ about now is cattle. The Government understands why the natives like to have cattle, but it is no use having cattle if you have not got something to feed them on?--- The only way we could sell cattle would be to sell them to the natives in the Location, but that does not help.

If you would be willing to sell them, there are white men who would be willing to buy?--- We have several white people who come to the dip and buy big oxen from us.

They do sell some, but they only sell when they have to pay taxes?--- Yes, and for clothing.

What I was asking you to do was to sell and to put the money with the Government to keep for you - to save it, so that when you want it, or want some new cattle, you could use that money to buy new cattle?--- Yes. The ^Gchiefs are always slaughtering oxen, but it does not make much difference; when we sell any of our cattle, it does not make much difference by selling them, because it is not every man who has a large herd of cattle; one might have two, another three, and so on. The only thing that we are complaining about is we only want our location extended.

Yes, but if the location cannot be extended, then you must use in the best way you can what you have got?--- We want the location increased. (THE INTERPRETER): I have told him that the Government are the only ones who can decide that.

People like me, who live in Johannesburg, have only a little bit of ground with a house, they cannot keep cattle there, although they would like to. So we save our money.....

money so that if at any time we can go and live on a farm, we can buy any cattle we want with that money; but while we are on that small piece of land we cannot keep any cattle there, because they would die - there would be nothing for them to eat. The same thing applies to you; if you have not got enough land you cannot keep such a large number of cattle?---- One man has three cattle and some more, up to ten.

Some have a lot, have they not?---- They only get about up to ten; but the Chiefs, Indunas, and so on, have the most cattle.

And could not the Chiefs stop anybody having more than just a few?---- No, they could not stop them from having such a big lot of cattle because they do not give their children away for nothing. They have to pay cattle for them.

But, if he has not got enough cattle a man has to go out to work to get the money to buy some cattle, has he not?---- Yes.

Well, now, if he has not got the cattle and has to go and buy them in that way, is it not just the same as if he has got cattle now, sells them, and gets the money so as to have it ready to buy cattle afterwards when he wants them?----- I have cattle; I have money to buy cattle, but what is the use of that?---- I do not want to buy more cattle.

I do not want you to buy more cattle; I want you to keep the money; to have fewer cattle and have the money ready to buy when you want to have cattle, - when you want to lobola?---- If I have a son and I have got the cattle, I can give him the cattle to go and lobola a wife.

Yes,.....

Yes; but if your son is now only five years old, you do not want to keep the cattle until the son is old enough to get married?--- The cattle will increase if I have only two or three while my son is growing up and, by the time he is big, I will have enough with which to lobola a wife.

You told us that a lot of your people go out to work. What is the main reason why they have to go out to work?--- They go to work so that they can wear clothes and get money and might be able to get money with which to buy cattle, and so get on.

Some you said never come back. Have you ever heard any reason why they do not come back?--- No, I do not know why they stay and do not come back. Most of these people go away to work just to get money to pay their tax, and some of those who never come back find that they get better food there - they eat all sorts of things.

In your tribe is lobola always with cattle, or do you have goats or sheep, or anything else?--- No, it is not only cattle, goats and sheep also.

Is it sometimes only goats or only sheep?--- You may not only lobola with only goats or sheep; if you have sheep you must give cattle with them; if you have goats you must also give cattle ~~km~~ with them.

How many goats do you reckon instead of a head of cattle?--- Six sheep are valued as a beast, and twelve goats as a beast.

DR. FOURIE: Do you add money sometimes?-- Sometimes we give money - five or six pounds, the value of a beast; mostly we give £5.

MR. LUCAS:.....

MR. LUCAS: But sometimes money is paid instead of a beast?--- Yes.

Have you known that happen in the last year?--- No, I have not seen it done lately - not this year.

There are not many Europeans' farms near you; but do your natives go out to farms near Louis Trichardt, or down to Pietersburg way, to work for the white people on the farms?--- Yes, many of them do.

And do they take their families with them, or do they just go and work for a time and come back to you?----- No, they do not take their families with them.

Do many of your people go to work on the mines in Johannesburg?----- Yes.

When one comes home does he come home for just a short while - six months or a year, and then go back again, or does he must go once?--- Some of them come back and stay about two months or three months, up to six months, and then go back again.

Has a man come to you from the Government at any time to show you how to lay out your work or lands?--- No, we were only told this the other day by the Commission.

You heard what the old baas said to you on Saturday about how to make the lands close together?--- Yes.

Now, you spoke about the law not being the same as for white people. Can you tell us what are you thinking about; tell us some things that happened?----- I say, if a white man comes to court here and the native is the complainant and the white man is the accused, when he is charged in court here he is not fined, he is let off, and the native is told "You did wrong to the white man; that is why he has hit you."

Has that happened, or are you just thinking that?---

That.....

That has happened.

Perhaps there were some things that heppened that you did not know about. The Court tries to be fair?--- No, it is because the one white man takes the other man's part.

Do the natives usually think, that, or is it just yourself who thinks that?----- Nearly all the natives think that.

DR. FOURIE: I want to know about those natives you have told us about, who go to the towns. Some unmarried people go there and come back?--- Yes, some of them go and work there and come back, and some do not.

Unmarried?--- Yes.

They marry there?--- Yes.

They never come back?--- Some of them come back with those wives; some never come back.

Do some of your people take their families to the towns and settle there?--- From our location there are none that take their wives and children away and never come back.

What is the reason, in your opinion, for some of your people staying in the towns and not coming back to their own tribe?----- Some of them like to live in the towns and some of them like the food they get there, and they waste their money on all sorts of things there.

Do they like European life more than tribal life?--- Yes, that is what I presume - that they like European life.

MR. LUCAS: Do any of your people bring back European furniture to their huts?--- Yes.

And then, when one sees one has it, and the other sees he has it, they want it too?----- Yes.

Is.....

Is that a reason why some of them go out to work in the towns?--- Yes.

TAKALANE called and examined:-

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you still an Induna today?--- Yes. You have lived all your life in Sibasa's location?---
----- Yes.

You have heard what these other men have told us?--- Yes
Do you agree with what they have said?--- Yes, I agree with what they have said.

Have you anything you wish to add to what they have said, or do you wish to say anything they have forgotten to say?--- Yes.

The Commission will be glad if you will speak openly and let out anything that is in your heart?--- Yes, it is true that you have come to hear about all our troubles and to see the country. We are glad to see that the Commission has come. The Government knows that it still has some children in this country. If there was not a Commission sent to see us, we would not be able to say anything. What is worrying me and what I want to speak about is this: we will tell you first what we have heard from our children who come back from Johannesburg. Lots of natives live in this country and go away there and get married there. They did not have rows with anybody at home. They get married there, lobola their wives and they send even their fathers and mothers money home too. If the people here at home say they do not get enough, complain that the children are not sending them enough money, they also complain back to their parents and say

"We.....

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