

subscribe to what the other people say in that document?— Yes. We just ask you to put these matters before the Government and as far as the money and the Land Bank are concerned, we ask you to teach us about it. You must not tell the Government about these things and you must not tell the Government to do things which you think should not be done. We look to you to help us.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we shall consider that point very carefull, but we do not want to recommend anything to the Government which may react against the interests of the native people?— Yes, that is what we ask you.

DR. ROBERTS: There is a common desire that the Government should take over the schools and that they should no longer be controlled by the missionaries. Do you all agree to this?— Yes.

If you all agree to it you must have some thought in your minds that the missionaries have failed?—

(Chief Mashashane): We see the ways in which the missionaries treat the schools. They do not treat the schools properly.

In what way do not they treat the schools properly?— They make us pay a lot of money. We buy books and we pay school fees. Our children are made to work outside and we do not what they are working for, we do not know whether that is the way in which to teach them.

Do you consider that that is sufficient to take away the schools from the missionaries?— I do not agree with that. I do not agree that the schools should be taken out of the power of the missionaries and should be given to the Government.

I know that there is a division, and I know that we

shall meet with this everywhere. It is an easy thing for you to say that the schools should be taken away from the missionaries, but you should think whether it is a wise thing, because at any rate three of you to my knowledge and two of the men who got up on their feet have been educated by the missionaries? - (No. answer).

MR+ LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: It is said in the document that the natives are too heavily taxed. Is it a fact that the Government reduced your tax some time ago? - (Chief Mashshane): Yes, the Government reduced the tax some time ago, but it did not do so to any extent, because some of us still pay £2, £3 and £1.10.0.

You only paid £1 to the Government. The other money you pay is a landtax for the location and an extra 10/- for every wife, and that money too is spent on the locations? - In what ^{way} does that money go to the locations? The roads that go to the locations are not repaired.

Do you pay for the building of the dipping tank? - The first dipping tank we paid for, but the others we did not pay for. It was erected last year.

Do you pay for the dipping of your cattle? - Yes, we pay; what about the 10/-?

That is what I say. You asked where the money goes. Now in studying that document I see that you say that the natives in the town should be paid at least £6 per month. Do you all agree with that? - (Maseti Ramokgopa): I am afraid we cannot go into that question, because we do not all live in the towns. We live outside.

That is why I say that you should not subscribe to these documents. You are subscribing to things which you know nothing whatever about.

MR. MOSTERT: What you have made yourselves guilty of is to subscribe to that document? - (Thomas Moloto): Yes, we agreed to it.

We are told that you must earn £6 in this town in order to be able to live? - Not the natives who live in the town. The natives who come from outside, when they come to town must be paid the same wage as the others.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it the position that you only agreed to those portions of the document of which you know and which affect you? - These people are our children. They do not belong to the towns at all. If they are sent to go and work somewhere else we cannot say that they do not belong to us. They have to go to work, but all the same they are our children.

Do you speak from your own knowledge when you say that it is necessary to have at least £6 per month to be able to live in town? - We are speaking from the knowledge which comes to us as chiefs.

So you know that it costs a man £6 to be able to live in the town? - According to the work a person does. If he does work that is worth £6 he should be paid that money. The money must be added to it.

Do you agree that it is necessary to pay £6 per month in town? - (Chief Mashashane): You put that question to me. I do not know whether it is necessary to put that question to me.

Well, you said that you agreed to this document. Do you agree to that or do you say that that is a thing which does not affect you and therefore you cannot

express an opinion on that?- I am afraid I cannot go any further into this matter, because when the Commission went out for lunch and we came back I found that the matter had already been drawn up. When I came back after lunch I found that the document had been drawn up and it was asked whether the Chiefs agreed with it. We thought that everyone could come here with his own paper and lay before the Commission what was written in that paper. If there was time I should have asked them to read out to me what the document says. That is why I cannot reply to your question.

So that you did not hear that document until you came here?- I can say that this is the first time I heard the document read, because I never met them before and I never asked them what was in the document. I thought the document was the same as the notes which I have.

What about the others, did you hear the document before you came here? - (Thomas Moloto): Yes, I heard the document before I came here.

And You?- (Maseti Ramokgopa): I heard it outside.

And what about you? - (Juel Matlala): Yes, I also heard it outside.

And you? - (Chief Mashashane): This is the first time I heard it read out.

MR. LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: Where were you people when the document was read out outside?- (Maseti Ramokgopa): We did not see these others.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now you want to say certain things on behalf of yourself. We are prepared now to hear what you have to tell us. You can read it out, if you have

it written down? - (Nkupu Mareli): The first thing that I wanted to talk about was the ground. The Government ground adjoining the Locations. I want to ask whether the Government would not meet us who are overcrowded in the location and lease us the Government ground which adjoins us in the location. We would be prepared to pay rent to the Government. On many of the farms outside near the locations there is no one living on them. The owners are living far away, except when they come and collect money for the lands which the natives plough. Some of these farms are Government property. I should like to know whether this Commission cannot make recommendations to the Government so that we natives should be allowed to lease these Government grounds which adjoin the locations. Secondly, I should like to know whether the Government could arrange to have an agricultural school for the locations outside. In erecting those agricultural schools they should see to it that there is a good supply of water and they should erect reservoirs, because it is necessary that we should have plenty of water there. And in the first place I should like to know whether the Government could not try and make provision so that our children would get a good education.

DR. ROBERTS: Would you tell me what you mean by "locations", don't you mean reserves? - Yes, I mean the reserves. I want to ask whether the Government cannot make education compulsory for the children outside, because if they do not our children will never get on. I think that would be much better than what we have. It is more than advisable that education should be compulsory. Those are the points which I wanted to speak about and which I was asked by my people to place before

the Commission.

MR. LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: You speak about the farms adjoining the locations. Now will you tell me whether that land belongs to the Government or to private people?— Some of these farms are Government property, and others are privately owned.

What are you driving at, do you want to lease the land belonging to private people or the land belonging to the Government?— I am not speaking on my own behalf — I am speaking on behalf of my tribe.

Yes, that I understand. What I want to know is whether you want to lease the land which belongs to the private people or to the Government? — We want to lease the Government land. We must be permitted to lease the Government land in the same way as the Europeans are. I want to say again that I am not speaking on my own behalf but on behalf of my people.

Has your tribe applied to the Commissioner to lease that land?— No. We have already asked the Commissioner for grazing lands, and our people have been charged 2/- per year.

Are not you satisfied with that? — We are not satisfied, because those farms have no water.

Do you consider that the rent is too high?— Yes, the farms have no water and we have to go elsewhere to look for water.

DR. ROBERTS: I want to ask you about the compulsory education; do you think it is possible? — Yes, if the Government, assist us it is possible.

At present only one-tenth of the children in the Transvaal are attending school. Do you think that if you had compulsory education that you would get the other

nine-tenths in ?- Yes, I think the others would attend if it was made compulsory.

I would ask you to think of the great expense it would be to bring that in immediately. It could be brought in at say locations and then in reserves. Native education just now is costing £600,000 per year, and it would cost a great deal more if ^{we}were to get compulsory education?- Yes, but it would be very good if we could get education for our children. It would enable us to make a better living.

MR* LUCAS: I want to ask you this. Do many of the natives from your locations go to work on the farms?- The majority of our natives go to work on the mines.

To which mines, in Johannesburg?- Yes.

Do they all come back?- Some of them come back.

And some of them stay away and never come back?- Yes, some of them stay away for always.

Do you know why they stay away?- I cannot tell you exactly what the reason is, but I do think it is because of the attractions of the towns. They like the town life now, and they think that if they go back home and live an ordinary natives life they will not like it any more.

Do these people remain in Johannesburg?- Yes.

And do they marry any women there?- Yes.

And then they become detribalised?- Yes.

Now about those who go and come back, about how long do they stay away before they come back usually?- They have a contract for six months, and some for nine months. Some of them return home after four or six months.

Why do they go away for such a short time as four months? - I could not tell you that - perhaps they are too

lazy to work.

What is their chief reason for going to the mines? - Their chief reason is to get money to pay their taxes and to get money to buy clothes.

Do they send any money home? - Some send money home, but others do not because they only earn small wages.

Now, about you, Thomas Moloto, are there any natives from your location who work on the farms in the neighbourhood? - (Thomas Moloto): Those who were given permission work on farms.

On what conditions do they work - what conditions do they get from the farmers? - What do they do and do they get food as well as wages? - Yes.

What wages do they get? - The wages vary from £1 to £2.

And what food do they get? - Mealie meal pap and meat.

How often do they get meat? - I do not know how often they get meat or how much they get, but from what they tell us when they come home I understand that they are fed on mealie meal pap and meat.

Those who work in the vicinity of the Pietersburg District, how much do they get? - 5/- per month.

MR. LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: What are they, big kaffirs or piccanins? - The piccanins get 5/- per month, and the grown-ups 10/- per month.

MR. LUCAS: how long does that usually last? - Sometimes six months, and they have nothing to wear. Some of them wear sacks.

Are there many who get as little as 10/-? - Yes, there are a lot.

Where is it that they get £2? You said that some got £2? - Yes, in the neighbourhood of Johannesburg, on the farms.

What is the highest any of your men are getting in the Pietersburg District? - £1.10.0. and the highest is £2.

Now these natives who work for wages like that, do they take their wives with them? - No, they leave their wives at home and they go to work.

And do they take any cattle with them? - No, the cattle remain at home too.

And do they get any grazing which they can work for themselves? - Those who work for coolies in town do not get any ground to work.

I am talking of those who go to work on farms - They only go to work on farms to thresh out mealies and they leave their cattle behind.

I am not quite sure that I have your answer right. Is what they get when they are working on farms their wage and their food or is there anything else they get? - They get food and they get their wage and the only thing is the clothes which they wear, which they brought with them - that is all they take with them when they go to the farms.

Now what is the position of your people who go out to work in the Pietersburg District? - (Maseti Ramokgopa): Our natives do not get work on the farms, except those who are farm labourers.

Yes, those are the people I want to hear about. What wages do people from your tribe get who go out as farm labourers in the Pietersburg District? - Those who are working on the farms are under an obligation to the

farmer to work.

You mean that they work as squatters, and that is why they are under an obligation? - That is so.

I was asking you about all your men who go from the reserve to work as labourers on the farms. What do they get? - It is not to my knowledge at all that any of our reserve natives go to work on farms. I do not think they go to work on farms at all.

Do you mean that they live on the farms of European farmers and they are under contract to work a certain time for their rent? - If that is so what are the conditions under which they have to work? - They are squatters and they work on a farm but they are not paid.

How long have they got to work? - Some of them have got to work three months.

Do any of them have to work two days a week throughout the year? - Not to my knowledge; to my knowledge they work three months in the year.

And do their wives have to work as well? - Yes.

And do they get paid? - No, they do not.

And the children, do they work as well? - Yes.

And do they get paid? - No, they do not. All of them have to work for three months.

And do they get food? - I do not know whether they get food or not, but I do think that whatever food they get is not of the best.

You do not know whether it is usual to give food to these labourers? - No. Some of them who are squatters and work on farms provide their own food.

Now you, Juel Matlala, do any of your natives go from the reserve to work for wages on the farms? -

(Juel Matlala): No, they do not.

Are any of them living as squatters on farms in the district? - Yes.

What are the conditions with them? - They work for three months.

Are those three months continuous, or do some of them have to work one or two days every week? - They have to work continuously for three months.

And do the women and the children have to work as well? - Yes.

And do the women and children get any pay? - No, they are not paid at all.

And do they get food? - No, they find their own food.

Is that usual in the district round about you? - Yes.

Now, you Chief Mashashane, is the position the same with you? - (Chief Mashashane): Yes, there are some of my people who are squatters and work for three months on the farms.

Do any of them have to work a little every week? - I do not know, I only see them when I pass. Some of them work three months and some of them work a little over three months.

And do the women and children have to work as well? - Yes, the women and children do work. The young boys are herding and the young girls and the women work on the lands.

And in the district where your people work, do the squatters get food? - Some are given food and some find their own food.

Now, in regard to these squatters, is there any opportunity for their children to go to school? - No,

how could a child have a chance of attending school when they are herding sheep and goats?

Do you as a chief object to that?- Yes, I object to it, it grieves us.

Have you a school in your reserve?- Yes, I have a school in my reserve.

And do all the children in the reserve go to school?- Yes, I think that about 500 attend the school.

I do not know how many people there are in the reserve?- It is a very small reserve.

You say that there are about 500 children at school Is that the majority of them?- Yes, but there are more children than that.

Do you speak to the parents about the children going to school?- No, if a parent wishes a child to go to school he will send him to school.

You want them to do so?- They want to send their children to school themselves.

Do you want them to be forced to send their children to school?- I think it would be a hardship if they are forced to send their children to school, because there are quite a number of them who will not have a school to go to, and what will their position be if it is compulsory?

But the other young children, do they all go to school?- Yes, they all attend school, but those over ten years of age do not always go.

Are there schools in your reserve, Nkupu Mareli?-
(Nkupu Mareli): Yes.

Can you tell us about how many there are at school?-
There are about 600.

Are they all at one school?- There are two branches.
One branch has about 400 children.

Do all the small children in your location attend school? - The majority of them do, but there are a lot of children who do not attend school.

And is there a school in the reserves of the other chiefs? - (Juel Matlala): Yes, there is a school.

(Maseti Ramokgopa): There are a lot of schools in my location. (Thomas Moloto): We have a lot too.

Now, I want to ask about lobola. In your reserve have there been cases when money has been paid instead of cattle? - (Chief Mashashane): Those who pay lobola in money are the Shangaan people. We in this country marry women with cattle and goats, but never with money.

Is that the same with the others of you? - Yes.

MAJOR ANDERSON: In regard to natives who are recruited by recruited - their pay is sometimes deferred. Do you like that system of deferred pay and do you always get the money which is deferred? - No we do not see any of the deferred pay sent home.

Do the natives themselves draw it if it is not sent home? - (Nkupu Mareli): It appears so. We do not get the money, and I suppose they get it. (Thomas Moloto): There is a recruiter, the firm of Baker and Smithers, when he sends juveniles away to Natal and elsewhere they are given a small amount in their pockets to supply them with food, but the bulk of the money is paid to them on their return.

THE CHAIRMAN: These tenants who stay on the farm for ninety days, do they get land to plough? - Some are given land to plough and some are not.

Some of the ninety-day tenants are given land to plough? - Yes, they are given a small piece of ground which

they can plough.

They are all given the same land to plough?-

(Chief Mashashane): Yes, just a small piece, but they do not get time enough to plough that small piece, because most of their time is occupied in ploughing for the landlord.

And do they get grazing for their cattle? - Yes.

How many cattle do they have grazing? - Just a few.

(Maseti Ramokgopa): If the cattle increase on a farm the owner of the farm sends them away.

If they increase to how many? - If they increase to ten.

You say that every native who has over ten head of cattle is driven away from the farms? - That is so.

Is that general? - Yes.

MR. LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: Are you quite sure of that? - Yes, quite sure. I am quite sure, because I have already seen cases.

Are you sure that there are no natives on the farms of Europeans who own more than ten head of cattle? - There may be some cases, because some Europeans are not like others and some may allow it but others do not.

THE CHAIRMAN: (To Messrs. Thema and Molapo): You suggested that inside of the urban locations it should be possible for a native not only to buy a stand of his own in which he would live himself but also to buy other stands. Why do you want him to have the right to buy stands? - (Thema): I want those natives to be their own landlords. They should be able to build their own house and they should have the right to do so, and they should be allowed to rent houses to other natives.

You point out that a detribalised native is dependent entirely on his wages. Now does that apply also to the tribal native?- No, it does not.

In other words, the tribal native can live on less money than the detribalised native?- Yes, that is so.

A lot of these natives come into town and that is the cause of a great deal of the trouble?- Yes.

Do not you think that if the wages for detribalised native remain higher than for tribal natives the tribal natives will get the jobs and the others will get nothing?- Yes, that is why I make the suggestion which I have done.

(Molopa): I speak in my statement of the Peculiar Group, and I say that they should make room for others.

You want the number of natives coming into the towns to be limited?- Yes.

In the interests of those who have no land outside on which they can live?- Yes, that is so.

You think that the wages are low because many natives who come in from the reserves are prepared to accept low wages?- Yes, I think that is the cause.

And if those natives did not come in do you think the wages would be higher?- I certainly think so.

Do you find that a detribalised native who is educated and lives here and gets to know the ways of the white man better can get better jobs than the man who just comes in from the reserve?- No, I do not think so. There are a few, but the white people would not employ me because I would ask for more. They would prefer to have a man working for a small wage.

Do not you think that there are jobs in which a man

who can do better work is worth more money than the other man who cannot do the same class of work or are there no such jobs for natives? - There may be jobs for the educated people. There may be a few.

As teachers and clerks? - Yes.

And in garages - do not they get such jobs in motor garages? - Yes, a few.

But there are more educated natives than there are jobs for? - That is so.

Now, if education were made compulsory, as the representative of Chief Pashlela recommended, there would be an even larger number of educated natives? - I think so.

In other words, one would have to make some sort of provision by which these educated natives would be absorbed, otherwise the position might become even more difficult? - Quite so.

Now, I made some inquiries about a family here. Do you have to pay 6d. per lb for sugar here? You put down 15 lbs of sugar? - (Molepo): Yes, very two days we have 1 lb of sugar.

So in a month's time you have 15 lbs of sugar. Some days you use a little more? - I put down 7/6 for sugar.

Now, do you have to pay 6d here for sugar? - Yes, here in town we have to pay 6d per lb for sugar.

When you buy the whole lb. at once do you have to pay sixpence? - Yes.

And you say that you pay 6d. in all the shops? - I could not say all the shops, but we mostly buy from small shops.

And you pay 6d? Are you sure?- Yes, quite sure. It should be remembered that Indians often do not charge the same price as Europeans, and most of our people buy from Indians.

Now you also have put down 3 loaves of bread per week. What is the size of these loaves?- They are the usual size - like that (witness indicates size of 2 lb loaf).

You get your bread fairly cheap here - I see 4d per loaf? - Yes, we get our bread here for 4d. and 3d. per loaf.

You have put down 15/- for mealie meal. It is 10/- a bag here. Do you pay more?- Well, the price is low when the price of mealies is down, but very often we pay on an average 15/- per month. It is only during certain seasons that mealies are cheap, and then we pay 9/6d or 10/-.

But your budget is based on present day prices. It is no use giving us the price of another time?- I put down the average price throughout the year.

You think that you would not be able to get your mealies at 10/- per bag on an average?- It is very rare. During this season, yes. But after the reaping season is over, and they are not bringing in any more bags for sale, then the price of mealie meal goes up.

What do you consider is a good average price to pay for mealie meal?- I think 12/6d.

That means that you allow 1.1/2 lbs of mealie meal per head per day? - Yes.

And then you allow 1/- daily for meat?. Now the natives who live out on the reserves, do they get meat daily? - No, they do not get it daily.

And you want to have meat daily?— Yes, we here in town have meat daily. We have it for breakfast, dinner and supper, but outside it is very rare that they have three meals regularly.

You have meat three times a day?— Yes.

It is not surprising that you cannot come out, because only comparatively well to do Europeans can afford to eat meat three times a day?— We are compelled to, Europeans take puddings and such things to replace meat, but we have nothing to replace it. It is for that reason that we spend much more on meat.

MR. LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: Yes, I suppose you have sugar on your porridge for breakfast? — We do not use sugar for porridge.

THE CHAIRMAN: It must be fairly apparent that there are very few natives in Pietersburg who earn over £6 per month. Would you say that there are many who earn over £6 per month — I mean a man with his family?— No, I do not think there are many.

In fact, there are very few?— Yes.

In other words, there is not what the native in Pietersburg is actually spending, but what you think he ought to have in order to live as well as you think he ought to?— No, that is what the native man in Pietersburg spends. I reckon on what I spend myself and on what I know some other people spend.

No, do you earn this yourself with your family?— I earn more than that.

You are all right, you can pay your debts, but natives who do not earn that how do they manage to pay their debts?— Well, they have to make beer, and somehow or other they have to steal. Some of them are doing all sorts

Collection Number: AD1438

NATIVE ECONOMIC COMMISSION 1930-1932, Evidence and Memoranda

PUBLISHER:

Collection funder:- Atlantic Philanthropies Foundation

Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive

Location:- Johannesburg

©2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of the archive of the South African Institute of Race Relations, held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.